

ISSUE

63

DECEMBER 2015–JANUARY 2016

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BUMPER
CHRISTMAS
ISSUE

NEW ZEALAND MADE

dish

Classic Christmas

casual celebrations & festive feasts

PARTY STARTERS
simple cocktails
& canapés

BUBBLING OVER
best festive drops

wrapped up
GIFTS TO MAKE
AND GIVE



TRIFLE LAYERED WITH
LEMON CREAM AND
RASPBERRIES WITH BABY
MERINGUE TOPPING
page 78



BEST MAGAZINE
HOME & FOOD 2015

*** the big day**
GLAZED HAM, TURKEY, GRILLED CRAYFISH,
MERINGUES *and* MINI CHRISTMAS CAKES

GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT



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**GOOD DESIGN
AWARD 2014**



Leaders in Multi Drawer Refrigeration

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easy care



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to do yoga in my
birthday suit

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PURE GOLD – Air New Zealand Wine Awards 2013
GOLD – Decanter Asia Wine Awards 2013

AKARUA VINTAGE BRUT 2010

CHAMPION SPARKLING WINE TROPHY
Romeo Bragato Wine Awards 2015
WORLD CHAMPION NEW ZEALAND SPARKLING WINE TROPHY
Champagne & Sparkling Wine World Championships 2014
GOLD – New Zealand International Wine Show 2014
GOLD – Royal Easter Show 2014
GOLD – Air New Zealand Wine Awards 2014
BLUE GOLD – Sydney International Wine Competition 2014

AKARUA ROSÉ BRUT NV

CHAMPION SPARKLING WINE TROPHY
Spiegelau International Wine Competition 2014
GOLD – UK Global Rosé Masters 2015
DOUBLE GOLD – China Wine & Spirit Awards 2015
PURE GOLD – Air New Zealand Wine Awards 2013
CHAMPION SPARKLING WINE TROPHY
Romeo Bragato Wine Awards 2013
GOLD – Royal Easter Show 2013
REGIONAL TROPHY – Decanter Asia Wine Awards 2013

If you have not yet tried the stunning range of Akarua sparkling wines, there are plenty of reasons to make sure you add them to your Christmas shopping list.

Released three years ago, the three wines have been recognised both internationally and here at home for their quality and style, amassing a total of 5 trophies and 12 gold medals.

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DISH MAGAZINE



DISHMAGNZ



@DISHMAGAZINE

What makes for a delicious Kiwi Christmas? Taking ideas and traditions from other places and adapting them to what seems right for our way of life – and our climate. One of the benefits of enjoying Christmas in the Southern Hemisphere is being able to pick and choose from traditional festive menus while adding a lighter, summery touch to make it very much our own. Whether you prefer to stick to traditional dishes or are looking for something new to wow family and friends on the big day, you're sure to find inspiration in the pages that follow.

Food writer Julie Biuso has stunning ideas to fill the table on Christmas Day: from crispy-skinned roast duck salad dotted with the fresh flavours of lychee and watermelon, to an irresistible trifle layered with summer fruit and lemon cream.

Food Editor Claire Aldous has created mouth-watering recipes that will see you through the festive season and beyond. For a casual approach to entertaining there are dips and platters to share, plus the perfect crowd-pleaser: a glazed ham; while Claire's recipes for ocean-fresh seafood (one of the great pleasures of a Kiwi summer) are sure to hit the spot – from eat-in-the-hand Prawn, Crispy Bacon and Mint Slaw Rolls to the ultimate in 'posh casual', Grilled Crayfish, Potato Skins and Aioli.

Turn to page 118 for wholefood cook Kelly Gibney's twist on traditional festive desserts. If you're stuck for gift ideas look no further than Sarah Tuck's delicious solutions for what to make and give to those you love.

If there's a recurring theme to the stories this issue it's a celebration of those who give back to the community. We go behind the scenes at a hāngi put down by Orphans Kitchen to fundraise for Kelmarna Community Gardens and visit Auckland's popular Coco's Cantina restaurant to meet the two sisters with big hearts who are behind it.

We're also very pleased to announce the results of the recent Magazine Awards, where *Dish* won Best Brand Community, Best Editor and Best Magazine in the Home and Food category. Huge thanks to everyone who contributes to the magazine, our website and events – and of course to all of you, our readers, for supporting what we do.

From all of the *Dish* team, we wish you a wonderful festive season and a very happy Christmas.

Lisa Morton, *Editor*
LISA@DISH.CO.NZ





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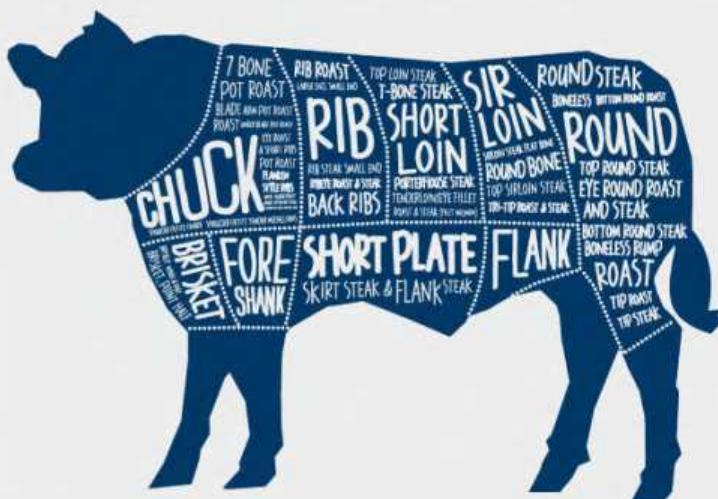
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dish

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Rest of World: One year (auto renew) NZ\$184.90

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2015
BEEF AND LAMB
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Enjoy an evening in the beautiful Karangahake Gorge with Beef + Lamb Ambassador Chef, Brad King of Bistro at The Falls Retreat. Enjoy a specially prepared five-course degustation available for one night only and hear what inspires Brad to create his award-winning dishes using New Zealand beef and lamb.

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SIDE DISHES

What's new, news and necessary for your kitchen

GO FOR GOLD

Bring a little bling to the drinks trolley this Christmas with glam metallics, party-ready polka dots and plenty of festive fizz.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Kate Spade Acrylic Ice Bucket \$115 from Allium (www.alliuminteriors.co.nz), Aarne Champagne Flutes \$198 (pair) from Simon James Concept Store (store.simonjamesdesign.com), Kate Spade Acrylic Pitcher \$133 from Allium, Karui Tray \$382 and Eclectic by Tom Dixon Tank Low Ball Glasses \$133 (pair) from Simon James Concept Store.

SIDE DISHES | *Christmas special*

HOLIDAY GIFT KIT



BREW KIT

For the coffee geek in your life: The Kokako Summer Holiday Kit features an AeroPress portable coffee maker as well as a Portlex Hand Grinder, 350 filters, 200 grams of Kokako Aotea Blend coffee beans and a fair trade cotton tote bag.

RRP\$169 from www.kokako.co.nz



A Friend Indeed

Imagine one of your close friends is a wine expert. They know exactly what your tastes are and they're always introducing you to fabulous new wines that they know you'll love. That's essentially how new online wine retailer, WineFriend, works.

Dish drinks writer Yvonne Lorkin and wine industry veteran Debbie Sutton are behind the new service, which uses a simple online survey to create a profile of your palate. Yvonne then uses this profile to curate personalised selections of wines for you each month, including a 'wild card' that she thinks could become your new favourite. To toast the season they've also created a Christmas Case of six wines designed to pair with classic Kiwi Christmas fare. To sign up or order go to www.winefriend.co.nz



FLOSS LIKE A BOSS

This Pashmak Persian fairy floss by Pariya will add instant glam to cakes and desserts this party season. Available in Rose, Pistachio and Vanilla from www.sabato.co.nz



If life was a box of chocolates we'd want it to be the Seashore Collection from Bennett's of Mangawhai – brimming as it is with delicious praline-filled seashells, chocolate fish, sea salt caramels and more. RRP\$43 from Father Rabbit stores or www.bennettsfomangawhai.com



Make it a crafty Christmas with this gift pack containing four delicious beers from Auckland's Bach Brewing. RRP\$32.99 from good craft beer retailers.

plate up a masterpiece like Sid would

SWEET TREAT



Little and Friday Biscotti and Macaroons, RRP\$15 each from www.littleandfriday.com



We'd bring lunch from home every day if we had one of these stylish washable paper lunch bags. RRP\$79 from www.paperplanestore.com



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Beechwood toast tongs, for the person who has everything. RRP\$12 from www.paperplanestore.com



Eat like a king with this golden 16-piece cutlery set. Email info@maytime.co.nz for stockists



Dry in style with this chromatic tea towel. RRP\$29 from Gorman. www.gormanshop.com.au



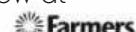
Madu Serving Plate, RRP\$59.90 from www.cittadesign.com



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SIDE DISHES



IT'S MY BAG, BABY

Great news for herbivores: Nadia Lim's popular home delivery dinner service, My Food Bag, is now available for vegetarians. Like the original, My Veggie Bag delivers all the ingredients for a week of balanced meals to your door. www.myfoodbag.co.nz



*Seletti and Toiletpaper Magazine porcelain plates,
RRP\$70 each from www.selettiboutique.co*



CRÈME DE LA CRÈME

This Brandy Clotted Cream from Clearwater Organics is the perfect accompaniment to all our Christmas sweet treats. For stockists visit www.clearwaters.co.nz



Perfect Panforte

If you're going to be giving panforte this Christmas, make it Pania's. Made in Upper Moutere, Pania's Panforte are deliciously dense, chocolatey and already beautifully wrapped. Available in gluten-free. RRP\$15 and available from www.paniaspanforte.tictail.com



Pearls of the Pacific

We've been enjoying products from Maiden South Pacific - a Samoan company producing high-end, organic products for the New Zealand market. Working with traditional family farms in Samoa, they produce an organic gluten-free breadfruit flour and a raw fermented coconut oil - both of which are available to buy at www.maidensouthpacific.co.nz



WIN A LIMITED EDITION PRINT

Drawing inspiration from the light and landscapes of Central Otago, Dunedin artist Neil Driver's unmistakable work is a unique fusion of contemporary and traditional painting styles. His upcoming exhibition will preview at Parnell Gallery from Tuesday November 3rd. To celebrate, *Dish* has a limited edition print on canvas, entitled *Pears and Camembert*, to give away. To see the work and enter the draw, visit www.dish.co.nz



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Please the whole family this summer!

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Ingredients:

Shoulder of Pork (Free range if possible)
1 X 150ml Bottle of Culley's Chipotle Hot Sauce
1 X 150ml Bottle of water
4-6 Whole peeled garlic
Always season to taste with salt and pepper



Burger buns and all your favourite trimmings.

Method:

Place Pork Shoulder in slow cooker, add the Culley's Chipotle Hot Sauce bottle, then fill with water, give it a good shake, and pour the water over the Pork Shoulder. Slow cook with lid on high for approx. 4-6 hours or until meat is tender and able to be pulled apart with two forks (depends on your slow cooker). Mix a table spoon of chipotle sauce with 2 tablespoons of your favourite mayo. That is amazing on the burger bun.

The Buffalo sauce range – splash on your favourite BBQ meats. We love it with chicken wings/nibbles!



Claim 30% off on all internet orders at www.culleys.co.nz for the duration of this issue
Enter code: #dish30

SIDE DISHES



Cheers for top beers

It's not often you see a bunch of brewers dressed to the nines, so when you do you know it's probably the Brewers' Guild of New Zealand Beer Awards.

This year the 9th annual celebration of New Zealand's brewing industry was held in September, with the Guild receiving a record-breaking 858 entries. Over three days in Christchurch, a panel of 25 expert judges awarded 59 Gold Medals, 159 Silver Medals and 243 Bronze Medals to breweries large and small from around the country. Each beer was assessed on how well it exemplified its particular style as well as its balance of taste, aroma and appearance.

While Martin Townshend's one-man brewery took out last year's top award, it was heavyweight Lion Breweries that was named NZ Champion Brewery for 2015. Raise a glass to all the winners!

THE WINNERS

Champion New Zealand Brewery
Lion Breweries

Champion International Brewery
Castlemaine Perkins (Aus)

International Lager
Lion Brewery (Auckland) for Beck's

New Zealand Lager
Panhead Custom Ales (Wellington) for Port Road Pilsner

British Ale
Mike's (Taranaki) for Mike's Organic Ale

European Ale
Garage Project (Wellington) for Tournesol

US Ale
Bach Brewing (Auckland) for Duskrider Red IPA

Pale Ale

Fork Brewing (Wellington) for Godzone Beat

Strong Pale Ale

Epic (Auckland) for Armageddon IPA

Stout and Porter

Raindogs Brewing Co. (Christchurch) for Singularity Imperial Stout

Wheat and Other Grain

DB Breweries (Auckland) for Black Dog – Blizzard

Flavoured and Aged

Good George Brewing (Hamilton) for Blueberry Gose

Specialty, Experimental, Aged, Barrel, Wood-Aged

Garage Project (Wellington) for Wabi Sabi

Cider or Perry

Forbidden Brewing Co. (Auckland) for Simply Apple Cider

Fruit or Flavoured Cider or Perry

Lion Breweries (Auckland) for Isaac's Apple Cider

Packaging

McCashin's Brewery (Nelson) for Stoke Amber 330ml 6pk

Champion Manufacturer

Steam Brewing

Morton Coutts Trophy

Gladfield Malt

BGNZ Beer Writer of the Year

Jono Galuszka



For a full list of medal winners visit www.brewersguild.org.nz

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Thanks to an ambitious new project, the future has never looked brighter for Emerson's Brewery.

Christmas Day might be just around the corner, but the shiny new toys are still about six months away for the team at Emerson's Brewery.

Midway through 2016, the beloved Dunedin brewery will relocate to impressive new premises nearby on Anzac Avenue. This means that as well as getting a new, larger brewery and bottling line, they'll finally have a place to share what they love doing with the public.

"We've dreamed of having a place where people could come and relax in a good environment for Emerson's," says Emerson's Brewery Manager, Chris O'Leary.

"We sat down with Lion and said, 'We need a real spiritual home', and they were prepared to back that for us."

That new home will be situated a little way up the line from the Dunedin

Railway Station and will house the new large brewery, a taproom, brewpub and a smaller brewery, all under one roof.

"The large brewery will surround the bar like a horseshoe and within that horseshoe there's going to be a little 1200L brewery where we'll be doing seasonal, collaborative and experimental brews. It will become a real workshop for us," says Chris.

As well as the core range of award-winning Emerson's beers, visitors will be able to try one-off brews and English-style cask ales available only on site. And while they relax with a glass in hand, they will be able to watch the Emerson's brewing team hard at work.

"The public can virtually touch and smell and see what's going on in the brewery while they sit there," says Chris. "And if they want to get a bit more hands-

on, we'll also be running fully interactive tasting tours twice a day."

There are few people in New Zealand more enthusiastic about matching beer and food than Richard Emerson, the brewery's founder and head brewer. Chris says his obsession will be reflected in the menu, which will feature "lots of small plates that go well with the beer".

While the team is looking forward to the move, they'll be working hard to keep customers' thirsts quenched in the meantime. This summer they'll release two seasonal brews: a "slightly more elevated" version of their famously fruity Pilsner and a 3.5% session ale called "Sitting Bear".

"It was inspired by the time Richard fell asleep at 7.30pm in the Nelson Free House," Chris explains. "But that's another story..."

FROM LEFT: James Falconer (Senior Brewer), Brendan Bransgrove (Brewer), Richard Emerson (Founder & Head Brewer), Chris O'Leary (Brewery Manager), Mason Pratt (Assistant Brewer)



Mint.
In more ways
than one.



Having pioneered the use of an enamel glaze on cast iron cookware nearly a hundred years ago, Le Creuset shows it's just as fresh now as it was then. With its new Cool Mint it's likely to stay looking mint till the day it's a treasured possession of grandchildren. Some processes have been modernized, but the handmade qualities of old remain reassuringly unchanged. The signature Flame colour remains, now complemented by new Cool Mint and a range of contemporary colours. It's authentic, it's original, and it's here to last. About what you'd expect from Milly's.

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WHAT'S ON

Food and wine events to mark in your diary

NOVEMBER

Saturday 21st

MÉTHODE MARLBOROUGH WINE MATCHED DINNER - BLENHEIM

Celebrated Marlborough chef David Anderson will create a five course menu paired with the region's most prestigious traditional méthode sparkling wines, all served around a vintage Spitfire aeroplane at Omaka Airfield. Tickets \$150pp or \$1,350 for a table of 10. RSVP to nicola@spyvalley.co.nz or call 03 572 6208.

Sunday 15th

ITALIAN CHRISTMAS MARKET - AUCKLAND

Get all your Christmas food, present and decoration shopping done at this authentic, one-off gourmet Italian market. Stick around for a coffee and a slice of wood fired pizza while you're at it. Visit www.dante.org.nz for details

DECEMBER

Saturday 5th

KAPITI FOOD FAIR

Get your Christmas shopping done early with a wide array of produce and artisan products from the Kapiti region and a long lunch for those with an appetite. Visit www.kapitifoodfair.net

Saturday 5th

CHRISTCHURCH SOUTH ISLAND

WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

More than 40 wineries from across the five South Island wine regions will present their wines in Hagley Park, with top local chefs plating up their best culinary dishes to match. Visit www.winefestival.co.nz

Thursday 10th and Friday 11th

BOOMROCK LODGE WINEMAKER LUNCHES - WELLINGTON

This series of lunches is held at Boomrock Lodge, atop a cliff on the 1200-hectare Papanui Station and looking out to the Tasman Sea. Guest winemaker Jules Taylor will present her wines alongside menu matches for the day. Visit www.boomrock.co.nz

JANUARY

Thursday 7th

GREAT FITZROY MUSSEL FEST - GREAT BARRIER ISLAND

Green-lipped mussels from the clear waters of the Hauraki Gulf are freshly harvested for this annual celebration, served plain, smoked or in a variety of dishes. Visit www.thebarrier.co.nz/musselfest.htm

Saturday 9th

TAIRUA SCHOOL WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL

The annual fundraiser for Tairua School, on the Coromandel Peninsula, gives locals and holidaymakers a chance to sample gourmet food and New Zealand wines and beers, buy arts and crafts, hear live music and enjoy the family fun zones. Visit www.tairuawineandfood.co.nz

Saturday 23rd

BRIDGE PĀ WINE FESTIVAL

This day-long wine festival brings together seven of the best Hawke's Bay wineries that produce wine within the Bridge Pā Triangle. Guests will sample the wines from this unique region, meet the winemakers, and enjoy local food and entertainment. Visit www.eventfinda.co.nz for tickets.



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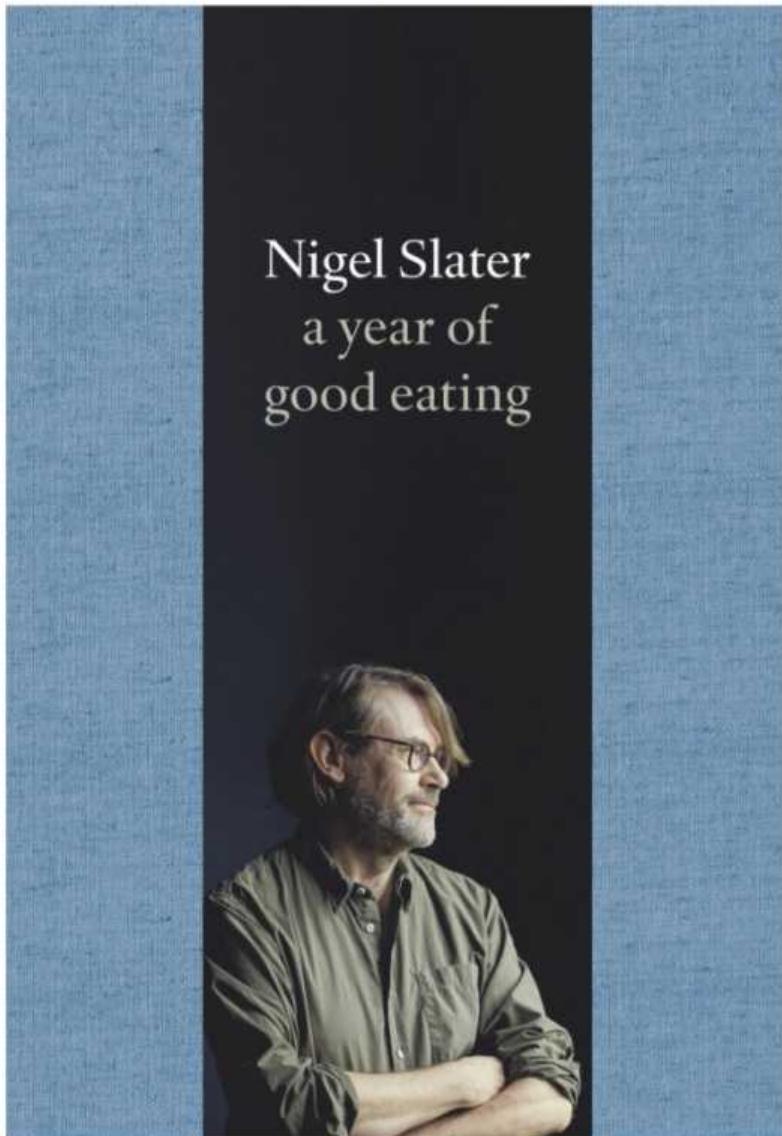
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BOOKS

Reviewed by Alice Galletly and India Essuah

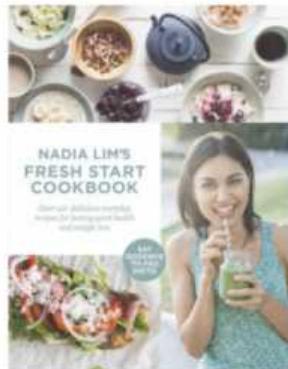


A Year of Good Eating

BY NIGEL SLATER

One of the best things about the holidays (food, of course, being another) is the time available to finally read those books that have been piling up by your bedside all year long. Who better to combine these two delights than Nigel Slater? *A Year of Good Eating* is divided by seasons, each section brimming with the charming, witty prose for which Nigel has become renowned. Between a selection of 250 hearty, achievable recipes is a series of diary entries with endearing titles such as 'Time on my floury hands', 'A Thai curry to make your heart pound' and 'Ice cream of Angels'. (A favourite begins, "Dear Mashed Potato, I don't see you much anymore, but I still think of you.") His fusion of daily documentation and poeticism reflects his wish for food to be something that's "quietly enjoyed rather than put on a pedestal", shunning perfection in favour of getting "stuck in". It's little wonder his books are so widely loved – you'll want to savour his thoughts on food as much as the dishes themselves.

HarperCollins – RRP\$44.95 (hb)



Nadia Lim's Fresh Start Cookbook

BY NADIA LIM

Cookbooks with the words "weight loss" on the cover can tend to get ignored around here, but it would be a mistake to overlook this latest offering from Nadia Lim based on this. The cookbook, which Nadia insists is "not a diet book", is full of achievable, affordable and yes, *healthy* recipes that, frankly, look absolutely delicious. It's easy to picture yourself starting the day with grilled stonefruit drizzled in honey and ricotta; lunching on a salad of roast eggplant, tomato, feta and lime; and whipping up jerk chicken with mango salad for dinner. It's tempting, too, to imagine that you might look like Nadia at the end of it, appearing as she does, fresh faced and glowing in exercise gear throughout. Whether you want to follow the meal plans, exercise tips and general "health rules" which accompany the recipes is up to you. Either way, this is a book from which many of us would happily cook and probably feel all the better for it.

Murdoch Books – RRP\$55 (hb)



NOPI

BY YOTAM OTTOLENGHI AND RAMAEL SCULLY

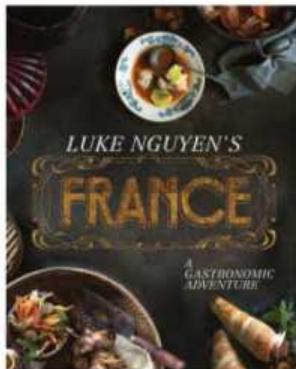
If you own any of Yotam Ottolenghi's previous cookbooks, such as *Plenty More* or *Jerusalem*, you'll notice that the recipes in the gorgeous, gilt-edged *Nopi* are more complex. The chef makes no bones about this – explaining in his introduction that "This is a restaurant cookbook: it features restaurant food."

The restaurant, of course, is his acclaimed London brasserie Nopi, and the book was written in collaboration with its head chef, Ramael Scully. It features dishes straight from the menu, which have been simplified slightly but retain enough complexity to do them justice. Yotam Ottolenghi's signature flavour combinations are all present – pomegranate seeds, sumac, miso and molasses – but this time in the form of elegant dinner party food.

If you have any keen foodies or adventurous home cooks to buy for this Christmas, then this is the ideal book to put under the tree.

**Penguin Random House
New Zealand – RRP\$50 (hb)**

Dunedin Born & Brewed



Luke Nguyen's France

BY LUKE NGUYEN

An accompaniment to the SBS television series of the same name, *Luke Nguyen's France* follows acclaimed Vietnamese-Australian chef Luke Nguyen as he explores the culinary landscape of France and its influences on Vietnamese cuisine.

From the famous bouchons of Lyon to the boulangeries of Paris, Luke eats his way across the country, learning the secrets behind France's most delicious dishes.

In the cookbook, which is divided into regions, Luke gives us his own versions of the dishes he discovers along the way. In most cases they are classics with a Vietnamese twist, such as Confit of Salmon with Ginger Oyster Sauce, French Onion Pho Soup, and Vietnamese Steak Tartare. The photographs of cobbled street markets, rolling farmlands and picturesque harbours will have you dreaming of a French holiday, but for now, the dishes in this book can take you there.

**Hardie Grant Books –
RRP\$59.95 (hb)**



Good Things to Drink

BY MR LYAN AND FRIENDS

Inspired by the joy the perfect drink can bring, Ryan Chetiyawardana has created a book that shares his passion for cocktails, removing any element of confusion or intimidation. Instead, with informal guides to equipment, ingredients and techniques, as well as dozens of recipes, he sets out to prove there are endless options for creating impressive drinks for friends right from your own kitchen. Divided into sections such as 'Summer Social Sips', 'Alfresco Days', and 'Fireside Serves', each recipe is accompanied by a charming explanation of its appeal as well as a photograph mouth-watering enough to have you reaching through the pages for a sip. Luckily, with Ryan's help you'll be able to recreate the stunning scenes yourself. A great book to have on hand for the social summer months with friends, and you'll no doubt end up with a few more faces around the table once word spreads about your brand new set of skills.

**Quarto Group UK –
RRP\$45 (hb)**



A Modern Way to Cook

BY ANNA JONES

There is no shortage of recipe books on the shelves promoting meat-free, wholesome, clean-eating these days, but few are as enticing as Anna Jones' *A Modern Way to Cook*. The second book from the Jamie Oliver-trained chef, food photographer and stylist, it centres on simple weeknight meal solutions that are satisfying and stress-free.

Anna has a knack for creating modern, vibrant cuisine that puts vegetables centre stage and her latest book is full of mouthwatering meat-free dishes. Stand-outs include Curry Leaf and Smoky Celery Pilaf, Honey and White Miso Aubergines and Crispy Cauliflower Rice with Sticky Spiced Cashews.

Chapters are divided by how long recipes take to prepare, with the longest meals requiring 45 minutes and the quickest ready in under 15. With beautiful photography and exciting vegetarian meal ideas, this would make a great gift for busy home cooks.

**HarperCollins –
RRP\$59.99 (hb)**



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Simply Nigella

NIGELLA LAWSON

Within the first chapter of this latest offering from Nigella Lawson, she denounces the trend of dividing food into paranoid categories of 'clean' and 'dirty', instead asking readers to embrace the idea of cooking for themselves, as an act of kindness and care. The recipes that follow each have a short and sweet ingredient list; you could point to almost any page and whip it up that evening with ease. Her takes on Chicken Noodle Soup, Indian-Spiced Shepherd's Pie, as well as meatballs, soups, stir-fries and dips make this a book a practical classic to stick with through the seasons. The 'Sweet' section is unsurprisingly decadent – you'll find some great options to add to your Christmas menu. A chapter entitled 'Breathe' is where Nigella explains how to slot slow-cooking neatly into your busy schedule, while 'Dine' seeks to add a sense of ease to entertaining: "I don't do smart, I do cosy," she states. And that, Nigella, is why we love you.

Penguin Random House
NZ – RRP\$65 (pb)

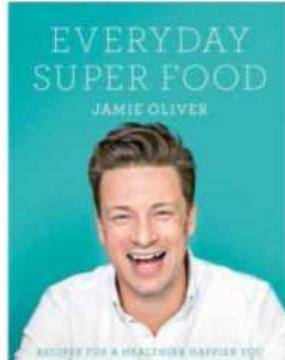


Bluebell's Cakery: Sweet & Savoury

BY KARLA GOODWIN

Whether you're looking to sweeten up a special celebration or make something simple for a morning tea with friends, Karla Goodwin from Bluebell's Cakery has compiled a selection of her recipes that are perfect for home bakers. Along with the gorgeous cakes, loaves and tarts for which she's become known, Karla also shares her secrets to decorating the perfect sprinkle or petal cake, as well as basic techniques for colouring icing or filling piping bags. The first part of the book is filled with delectable savoury recipes which, like her sweet treats, are classics to be savoured. Alongside the chicken finger sandwiches, sausage rolls and pastries you'll find recipes for Banh Mi, and Miso Chicken sandwiches; there's something to suit every taste. With stunning photography by Tam West, this book would make a brilliant Christmas gift for aspiring cooks – although no one would blame you for popping it in your own stocking either.

Penguin Random House
NZ – RRP\$65 (hb)



Everyday Super Food

BY JAMIE OLIVER

New from Jamie Oliver is a cookbook packed with the sort of simple, delicious fare that will have you looking forward to dinner all day long, without the dread of hours in the kitchen. The dishes inside are a match for Jamie's 1000-watt smile, adorned as they are with vibrant ingredients. *Everyday Super Food* takes a fresh approach to the term 'superfood', using it to encompass a huge range of fresh flavours rather than a few trendy grains or seeds. Dishes like 'Super-Tasty Miso Broth with Chicken and Mushrooms' or 'Griddled Steak and Peppers with Herby Jewelled Tabbouleh Rice' (not to mention his 'Happiness Pasta') would be enough to swiftly win over anyone slightly dubious about a health-conscious cookbook. The chapters cover breakfast, lunch and dinner and include ideas for some delicious snacks, finishing off with a chapter dedicated to Jamie's superfood philosophy when it comes to creating luscious desserts.

Penguin Random House
NZ – RRP\$65 (hb)

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GREEN MONDAYS Fans of regular *Dish* contributor Kelly Gibney rejoice: you can also find her online in the form of her fortnightly recipe column, Green Mondays, which features her signature flavour-first whole food recipes. Find Kelly's regular recipes online at www.dish.co.nz/recipes



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BREAKING THE MOULD

Jessica Mantis makes jelly, but not as your grandmother knows it. Think multi-coloured castles of tropical punch, leaning towers of strawberry lemonade and glittering grape-flavoured diamonds. ALICE GALLETTLY steps into the whimsical, wobbly world of The Jellyologist.



BLACKCURRANT ELDERFLOWER JELLY



PINK CANDY CANE JELLY



To say that Jessica Menthis makes jelly would be oversimplifying things. Her creations almost defy categorisation, occupying a unique space somewhere between art, food and fancy cocktails. “My aim is to merge architectural practices with cuisine,” she says. “I really enjoy the idea of working on something that’s going to be consumed. To put all this time and energy into something, and then have people eat and enjoy it – it’s a really accessible form of art.”

A spatial design and architecture graduate, Jessica has always had a passion for food. She never considered that these two areas might intersect until living in London, when she came across the works of mad food scientists Sam Bompas and Harry Parr.

The duo’s outlandish stunts have included flooding part of a building with four tonnes of alcoholic punch; creating a cloud of vaporized gin and tonic (“You walk into it and get drunk through your eyeballs,” explains Jessica); and putting on a multi-sensory ‘edible’ fireworks display.

“Bompas and Parr were my heroes,” she says “They’re also trained architects, but they apply the processes and techniques of architecture and design to food. I had been looking for what my practice would be and when I discovered their work I was like, ‘Well, that’s it.’”

After initially trying to land a job with their company, Jessica decided to move back to Auckland and set up Menthis Studios, which would be New Zealand’s answer to Bompas and Parr. “Easier said than done,” she reflects. “I didn’t have any money, didn’t have connections and I didn’t know how to get my ideas out into the world.”

Then she discovered The 100-Day Project through creative magazine *The Great Discontent*, which involves doing one thing every day for 100 days. Jessica decided to take part by creating a different jelly every day using techniques she had learned in architecture school.

“It was a way for me to launch this idea from my head out into the world and to test them out with an audience,” she explains, “and jelly was the perfect tool. I’m not a trained chef, so tempering chocolate and learning molecular gastronomy was going to be a bit hard to do in

100 days. Jelly was easy to make and to adapt.”

Most people probably wouldn’t use the word “easy” to describe any part of Jessica’s process. Each day she would design a mould in a modelling program called Rhino, then bring it to life using a 3D printer at AUT, where she works as a tutor. Some of the simpler shapes were formed in a few hours while the more complicated moulds, such as castles, fortresses and the like, could take almost the entire day. Once Jessica had her mould she had to decide what to fill it with. “The flavours were part of the experimentation, so I tried to be quite innovative. Lots were jellied versions of cocktails: I did whiskey old fashioned, gin and elderflower, Negronis – none were your average Gregg’s Blueberry.”

Jessica began sharing her creations on Instagram under the name ‘The Jellyologist’. She styled and photographed each jelly in her studio (which also doubles as her parents’ garage) and uploaded them to Instagram, where they quickly gained an enthusiastic audience.

“It was amazing,” says Jessica. “People were just into the jelly straight away and started responding to it. Then Lorde’s mum shared one of my pictures and everything kind of kicked off from there!”

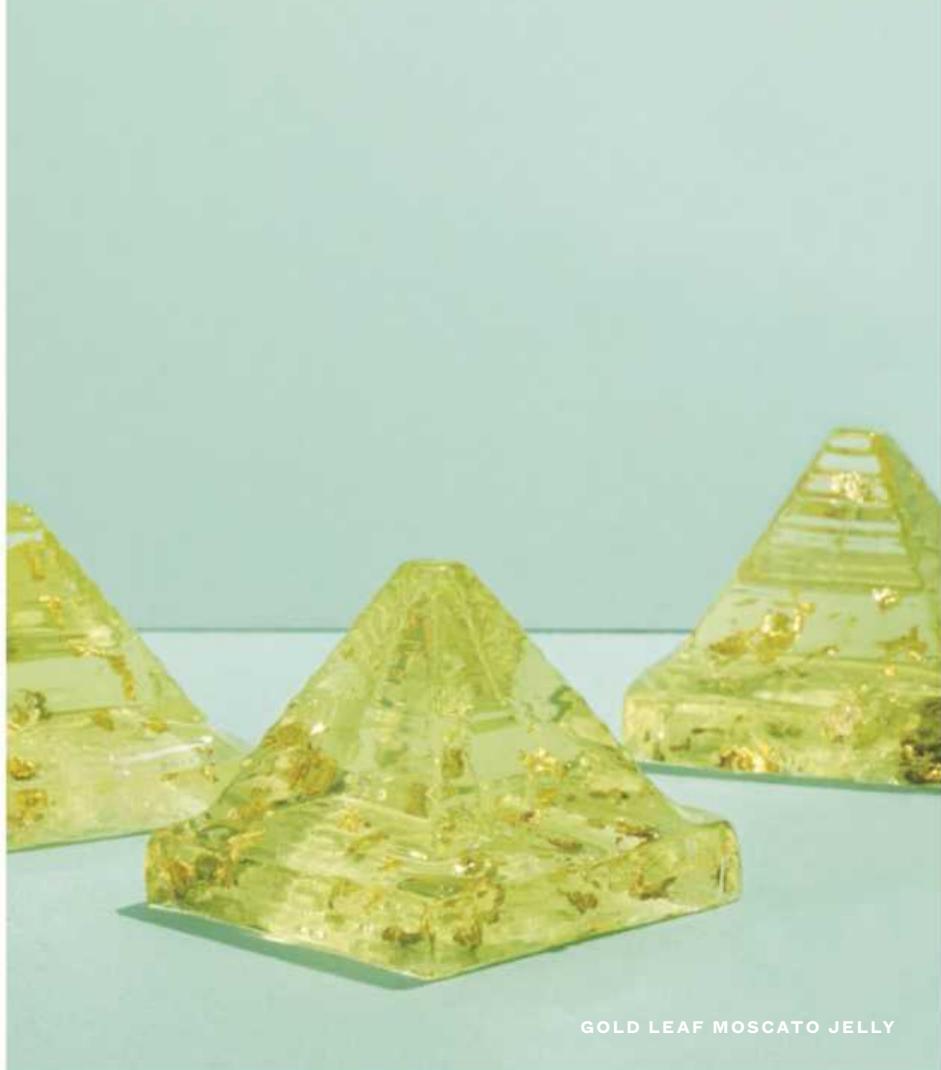
Although the 100-Day Project is now complete, the jellies have taken on a life of their own. Jessica’s been busy working on various projects and installations, including a painting by American pop artist Roy Lichtenstein made of 1200 ginger chamomile martini-flavoured jelly shots for Seafarers Britomart, and a jelly chandelier for the Melbourne Cup.

“I’m also catering for a hen’s party this week, which I swore I’d never do,” she confesses. “But it turns out everyone’s got their price!”

Looking ahead, Jessica hopes to diversify beyond jelly, which she says was “never the end goal”.

“It was just one way to get the ideas out into the world, but now I want to look at other ways of applying design principles to food. Although of course, I will always love the jelly!”

Menthis Studios — www.mentisstudios.com
www.instagram.com/thejellyologist



GOLD LEAF MOSCATO JELLY

Champagne Raspberry Jelly

600ml champagne or sparkling wine

200ml sugar syrup (recipe opposite)

9 sheets gold grade leaf gelatine,
cut into small pieces

16 whole raspberries

8 x 100ml moulds

Slowly pour the champagne into a large jug (so as not to froth) and add the sugar syrup. Put the gelatine in a heatproof bowl and pour over enough champagne mixture to cover (about 100mls). Leave to soften for about 10 minutes.

Sit the bowl of gelatine over a saucepan of boiling water *ensuring the base doesn't touch the water* and stir until the gelatine has dissolved. *The champagne may froth up.* Leave to cool until the froth and bubbles disappear. Pour slowly through a sieve back into the jug of champagne and sugar syrup.

Pour into the moulds, leaving space at the top. Drop two raspberries into the jelly (*they'll float up to the top*) and place in the fridge to set. **Makes 8** (and leaves a glass of bubbles spare to have while making them!)

PANTRY NOTE: Gold grade leaf gelatine is available from specialty food stores.



REMOVING JELLY FROM THE MOULD:

Dip each jelly mould into a bowl of hot (not boiling) water for a couple of seconds. Gently ease the jelly away from the sides with your fingers and turn out onto plates. They should just pop out. This can take a bit of practise, but is easy once you get the hang of it.

“I really enjoy the idea of working on something that's going to be consumed. To put all this time and energy into something, and then have people eat and enjoy it – it's a really accessible form of art.”

Gold Leaf Moscato Jelly

700ml moscato

100ml sugar syrup (recipe below)

9 sheets gold grade leaf gelatine,
cut into small pieces

1 sheet edible gold leaf

8 x 100ml moulds

Slowly pour the moscato into a large jug and add the sugar syrup.

Put the gelatine in a heatproof bowl and pour over enough moscato mixture to cover (about 100mls). Leave to soften for about 10 minutes.

Sit the bowl of gelatine over a saucepan of boiling water *ensuring the base doesn't touch the water* and stir until the gelatine has dissolved. Leave to cool for a few minutes then pour through a sieve back into the jug of moscato and sugar syrup.

Fill a bowl with iced water and place the jug into the water to rapidly cool the moscato liquid. Keep stirring until the liquid begins to thicken. Add the gold leaf and stir with a fork to break up the pieces. Before the liquid begins to set, pour into the moulds and place in the fridge to set.

Makes 8

PANTRY NOTE: Edible gold leaf is available from specialty food stores. Plastic cups will work just the same as the moulds I use, but won't create the same rad shapes – obviously.

SUGAR SYRUP: Put 1 cup of sugar and 1 cup of water in a saucepan over a medium heat. Heat until sugar is completely dissolved and set aside to cool. Bottle and store in the fridge.

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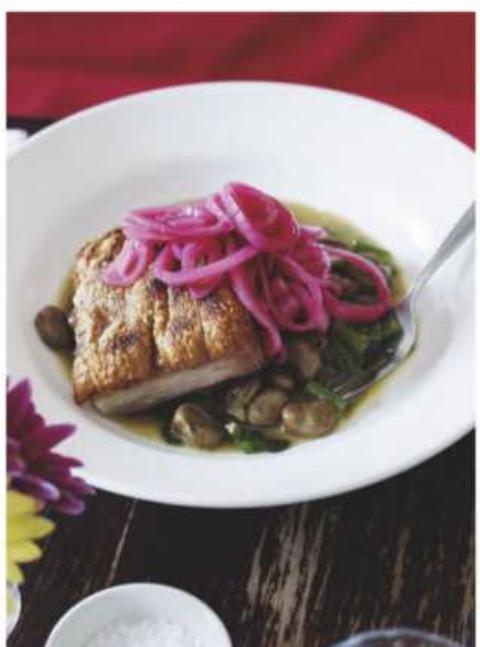
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In the neighbourhood

Sisters Renee and Damaris Coulter have brought the comfort and flavours of Italian family-style food – and its warm heart – to Auckland’s colourful K Road.



Tonight, for the very first time, Coco's Cantina will be hosting a midnight yoga session.

Attempting the child's pose or downward dog at the end of service in this frenetic, inner-city restaurant may seem an unusual way to encourage staff to wind down, but when you meet the sisters behind Coco's, Damaris and Renee Coulter, you realise that nothing is ever too out there.

"We wanted to offer something to our staff to help promote mindfulness and thought instead of always finishing the night with a staff drink, we could do something that wasn't quite so habitual, so we thought of yoga," says Damaris.

Giving back to staff and the community around them is central to the ethos of Coco's Cantina. Located as it is on Auckland's Karangahape Road, the restaurant has a colourful bunch of neighbours, including adult shops, strip parlours and ladies of the night. Often, the homeless congregate nearby and the area's interesting characters wave as they wander past.

"When we first moved in here we were really worried about how having all of these different people around us would affect our customers," says Renee. "We used to chase away the homeless people sitting at our outside tables and the drunks who would linger, but that was the wrong way to approach it. Once we began making them cups of tea and looking them in the eye and saying 'Hello' and 'Good morning' we got their respect, they had ours and now we all have a really wonderful relationship. We get lots of waves of 'Hello' and we look out for each other."

Each Friday night, staff package up meals for the Prostitutes Collective to collect and distribute to women working in the neighbourhood and they run fundraising events regularly for a range of charities. This dedication to

their community and the desire to help those around them has seen Coco's Cantina become a bit of a hub for social justice as well as an award-winning eatery, where it can be very difficult to find a table if left too late.

As busy as it is now, when the doors first opened the sisters wondered if they had made a terrible mistake.

"We opened on September 21st 2009 and spent the first three weeks playing backgammon and waiting for customers to come in. Fortunately, we had a couple of wealthy friends who would bring in their friends every night. Otherwise, it was dead and we thought, 'F**k, we have taken out a lease on this place, if the restaurant doesn't work we'll have to draw a line down the middle and move in,'" says Damaris.

Everything changed overnight when food writer Nici Wickes gave them a glowing review. Coco's tables have been filled with customers, many of them regulars, ever since.

What brings them back is the convivial home-away-from-home atmosphere, the delicious rustic Italian food and the sisters' friendly, warm and efficient service.

"Service is hugely important to us," says Renee. "It's what we pride ourselves on and I always feel terrible if we can't live up to our standards. I'll say to people... 'Sorry, we can't offer you a table tonight as we are so busy that we can't provide you with the level of service you deserve.' Some people might think we're silly to turn away customers but I'd feel terrible if they had to wait too long for their food."

In fact, the sisters have known little else but hospitality since they left school. Brought up in the Far North, they completed school in Auckland, earning pocket money washing dishes and waitressing at suburban restaurants until it was time to embark on their respective OEs. Renee headed for London and Damaris landed in Italy, where she soon fell in love with the Italian way of eating and celebrating food. Once back in New Zealand they worked their way up through the hospitality ranks at high-end restaurants before they felt ready to go out on their own.

The food at Coco's was always going to be Italian with a Kiwi twist, but the feel of the place lies more in the relaxed little eateries Renee visited while travelling through Cuba and Mexico.

"In Italy, eating out is almost a daily occurrence for people so the restaurants are very functional. They don't play music or have candles like you see in the movies. The lighting is bright and there is not a lot of atmosphere, because the food is the event and the atmosphere is provided by the people you are with, usually your family," says Damaris.

"Conversation is always flowing and a restaurant is treated like an extension of the home. When creating Coco's

OPPOSITE PAGE
The interior of Coco's Cantina is an eclectic but welcoming mix of traditional Italian café-style and the sisters' own touches, such as a wall mural by local artist Flox (top right); Roasted Pork Belly with Braised Broadbeans and Pancetta (bottom left); staff enjoy of a bowl of spaghetti before service begins (bottom right).



“Where our food comes from is really important to us. We don’t serve trawled fish and we use Leigh Fisheries who provide us with more *sustainable species* like kahawai or ling, which tastes every bit as good as snapper.” — RENEE COULTER

we wanted to combine the simple, three ingredients-based dishes of Italy with a fun and lively atmosphere, because going out for dinner is a treat here for most people.”

They chose the K Road location because of the cheap rent and because they didn’t want to be another Ponsonby restaurant; they wanted something with a feel all of its own.

The menu is kept small for two reasons: quality control and the fact the kitchen is really just a smidge bigger than a domestic one. Ingredients are sourced locally and Renee and Damaris have forged great relationships with their suppliers.

“Where our food comes from is really important to us,” says Renee. “We don’t serve trawled fish and we use Leigh Fisheries, who provide us with more sustainable species like kahawai or ling, which tastes every bit as good as snapper. We have started a garden at our parents’ place in Miranda so we grow as many veges as we can. We’ve decided we want to be a part of the solution and not the problem, so we will continue to look for new ways to do better.”

New dishes are added seasonally and they rub shoulders with the firm favourites like Chicken Liver Parfait with Sweet and Sour Onions and Toast, Chargrilled Steak with Salsa Verde and Hand Cut Fries, Spaghetti and Meatballs, and Tiramisu. “There would be a riot if we ever stopped the Tiramisu,” laughs Renee. “We would be hunted down.”

To gather more inspiration for the restaurant and to celebrate its five years in business, the sisters helped fund the staff on a two-week trip to Italy earlier this year.

The first week was spent in Rome, where they hit as many cafés, aperitivo bars and restaurants as they could before moving on to Tuscany, where they rented a huge farmhouse and spent the week going to the market and cooking delicious feasts – they even had their own version of *MasterChef*. They took a cameraman who documented the whole experience and the sisters hope to turn this into a short film. They also have plans to publish a book and Damaris is working on an app that will help diners find Coco Cantina-like eateries around the world.

But first, they will be renovating. “Currently we have two dining rooms and a tiny kitchen,” says Renee. “How the chefs have worked in it for this long without killing each other and us is a miracle. We’re going to knock through to create one big beautiful dining room and will still have the bar down one side. We wanted to give our diners more space to enjoy themselves and to be able to cater for more groups. At the moment we can only take one group booking a night.”

Damaris says there’s not much room for downtime. “We both need to work on work-life balance, but our Nan always said to us, ‘If you aren’t doing something then you are being lazy’, so why wouldn’t we offer our time and our services to other people? At the moment we’re trying to be the change we want to see and we have got so much more to do.”

ABOVE LEFT: Roasted Chicken Leg with Veronese Sauce.

ABOVE, RIGHT: (From left to right) Chef Guiherme ‘Will’ Bezerra, Renee, Damaris and head bartender Petaia Unoi.

FLAT-IRON STEAK

a slice of innovation

The flat-iron steak cut may be recent in origin, but its tenderness and succulent flavour are sure to make it a firm favourite with lovers of beef for years to come.

It's hard to believe a new cut of beef could have been created and introduced to kitchens and dinner plates as recently as 15 years ago, but the origins of the flat-iron steak are the result of work by research teams from the University of Nebraska and the University of Florida in the early 2000s, funded by the American National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

American in origin, flat-iron steak is also known as 'butler's steak' in the United Kingdom, from the days when the butler of the house would bags the best piece of meat for himself.

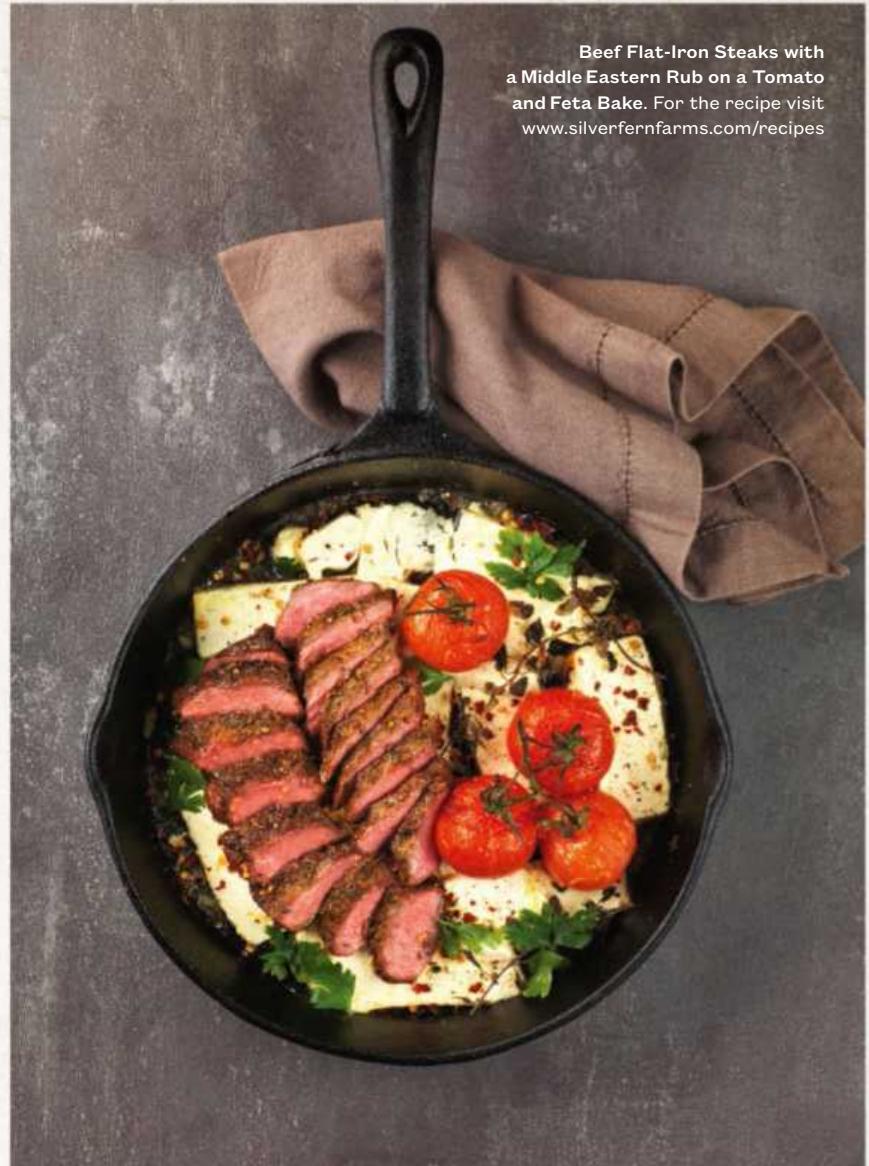
Called a 'flat-iron' due to its unusual shape – resembling an old-fashioned iron – the cut comes from the animal's shoulder muscle, which sits around a seam of gristle. Silver Fern Farms Flat-Iron Steaks have had the long muscle on top of the gristle expertly removed. When carefully sliced like this they are as tender as they come and have a rich, succulent flavour.

But what really sets Silver Fern Farms Beef Flat-Iron Steaks apart, is that they have been graded A+ by their Eating Quality System®. All beef animals are hand-selected by Master Graders to meet stringent criteria. This means your steak is guaranteed to be tasty, tender and juicy, every time – taking a typically average eating steak and making it sensational.

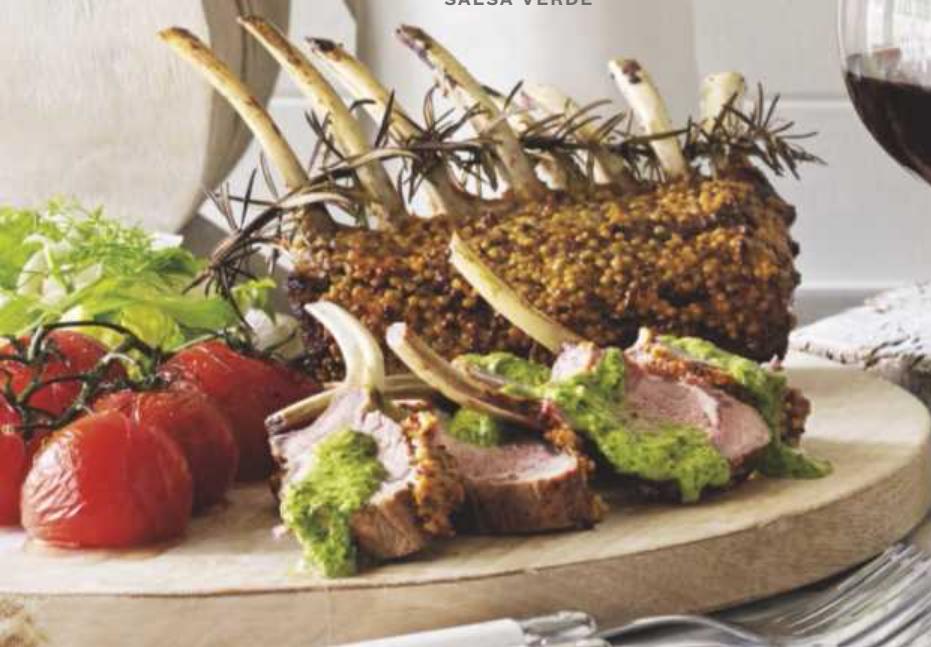
Top Kiwi chef and master of the barbecue, Martin Bosley, has some easy to follow tips on how to get the best out of each piece of Silver Fern Farms Beef Flat-Iron Steak. Martin takes you through the cooking process during an entertaining and informative video that can be found on www.dish.co.nz. With beautifully produced and selected meat, and Martin's inspiring recipes, cooking tender beef will never be tough again.



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Digging in

Tom Hishon of Orphans Kitchen recently held a spring feast at Kelmarna Gardens in order to keep the Auckland oasis on its feet.

It's hard to imagine a scene more serene: families and friends lazing about on picnic blankets, knees stained from the lush grass; a rogue lamb providing the loudest sound as groups wander Auckland's Kelmarna Community Gardens foraging, listening to the mellow music from a central tent or waiting for the hāngi that's about to fill 300 empty plates.

Yet it's this last element that had Tom Hishon, the head chef and co-owner of Ponsonby restaurant Orphans Kitchen, shaking in his sneakers during the Kelmarna Spring Festival. The chef is used to cooking for dozens of hungry diners each night, but creating a feast for a few hundred people at once, particularly as they look on expectantly, isn't so familiar. With plates at the ready, they surrounded the pit that Tom and his team, led by Jason Pipi, had dug the previous day.

"It was my first attempt at a hāngi, so I was lucky to have my good mate Jason there – he'd done a few before," Tom explains. "I was still super-nervous. When we started digging in there was a huge sense of anticipation, from myself and everyone else. Then the steam started gushing up and there was cheering. I took that as a really good sign."

But there was more than a few hundred lunches riding on the outcome of the hāngi. Like many local restaurateurs, Tom had been tending a plot at Kelmarna for several years and offered the idea of a hāngi as a fundraiser after he found out the gardens had lost their funding.

Bordering Cox's Bay, Grey Lynn and Herne Bay, Kelmarna Organic Gardens have been operating since 1981. In 1992, the gardens became a therapeutic centre run by health and disabilities services provider Framework, which ended its sublease at the beginning of this year. The Kelmarna Community Garden Trust leases the land from Auckland Council and is now looking for ways to keep the space running. Like Tom, many see the gardens as an inner-city oasis and are willing to work hard to preserve it. Orphans Kitchen was founded with the aim of connecting people in a beautiful and relaxed setting, and Tom says the gardens are capable of doing the same.

"I feel sometimes within a large city like Auckland we're losing that sense of community and Kelmarna's a really unique place to bring that back. Just to be able to connect with people who are all from the same neighbourhood is really special," he says.



Tom and his team arrived before sunrise on the Sunday of the hāngi, having dug the hole and built the fire the day before. After they'd lit the fire and let it burn for over three hours they got stuck in with spades and "dug like crazy" to create the earth oven.

"There was a team of about ten of us, taking turns in five-second intervals because it was so hot – your skin would almost be blistering," Tom says.

Cooking with goat, mutton and pork donated by Zeal Fresh, Tom says he was keen to make sure the meat was perfectly marinated and tender, as often meat cooked in a hāngi can be "quite dry and bland".

"I tried put my own spin on things and incorporate flavours that don't necessarily get used in a hāngi," he says. "Brining came to mind instantly. The mutton was rubbed heavily with rosemary black pepper and olive oil; the pork shoulder was marinated in a sweet feijoa paste we made last autumn. All the meat and vegetables were wrapped in banana leaves before being placed in the baskets. We also made a beautiful big salad from the gardens, which was all foraged on the day. Everyone was chipping in."

While the countdown to the hāngi ticked on, for a small koha, Spring Festival-goers could take part in tea-brewing

workshops, beekeeping classes or a foraging expedition led by Kelmarna's garden manager, Adrian Roche.

The Organic Mechanic was on site serving fresh smoothies; Kelmarna's store offered cake and salads from Little Bird Unbakery, as well as produce picked fresh from the gardens right outside.

Needless to say, Tom's hāngi, which had everyone's plates brimming with food for a mere \$15 a ticket, was a hit with the hungry crowd and the festival raised over \$7000 to help keep the gardens open. What's more, he says there are plans to hold a similar event during the summer months. After nervous beginnings Tom counts the day as a definite success.

"Probably the best thing on the day for me was seeing so many neighbours coming together. It was really exciting to see lots of smiley faces there and knowing so many people were keen to support the cause and help us out."

Orphans Kitchen — 118 Ponsonby Rd, Grey Lynn, Auckland

Kelmarna Community Gardens — 12 Hukanui Cres, Herne Bay, Auckland

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Jason Pipi and Tom Hishon put down the hangi early on a Sunday morning; the spring festival community event raised \$7000 for Kelmarna Gardens.

THIS PAGE: It was a long day of hard work for Tom, Jason and the team as they prepared the feast; the end result made it all worthwhile.

A brave new world

Cooking contemporary Japanese at home doesn't have to be scary, explains Auckland chef Nic Watt.

Nic Watt's biggest hope is that you'll make a mess of his new cookbook. Seriously. The more stained and dog-eared the pages, the happier the Auckland chef will be.

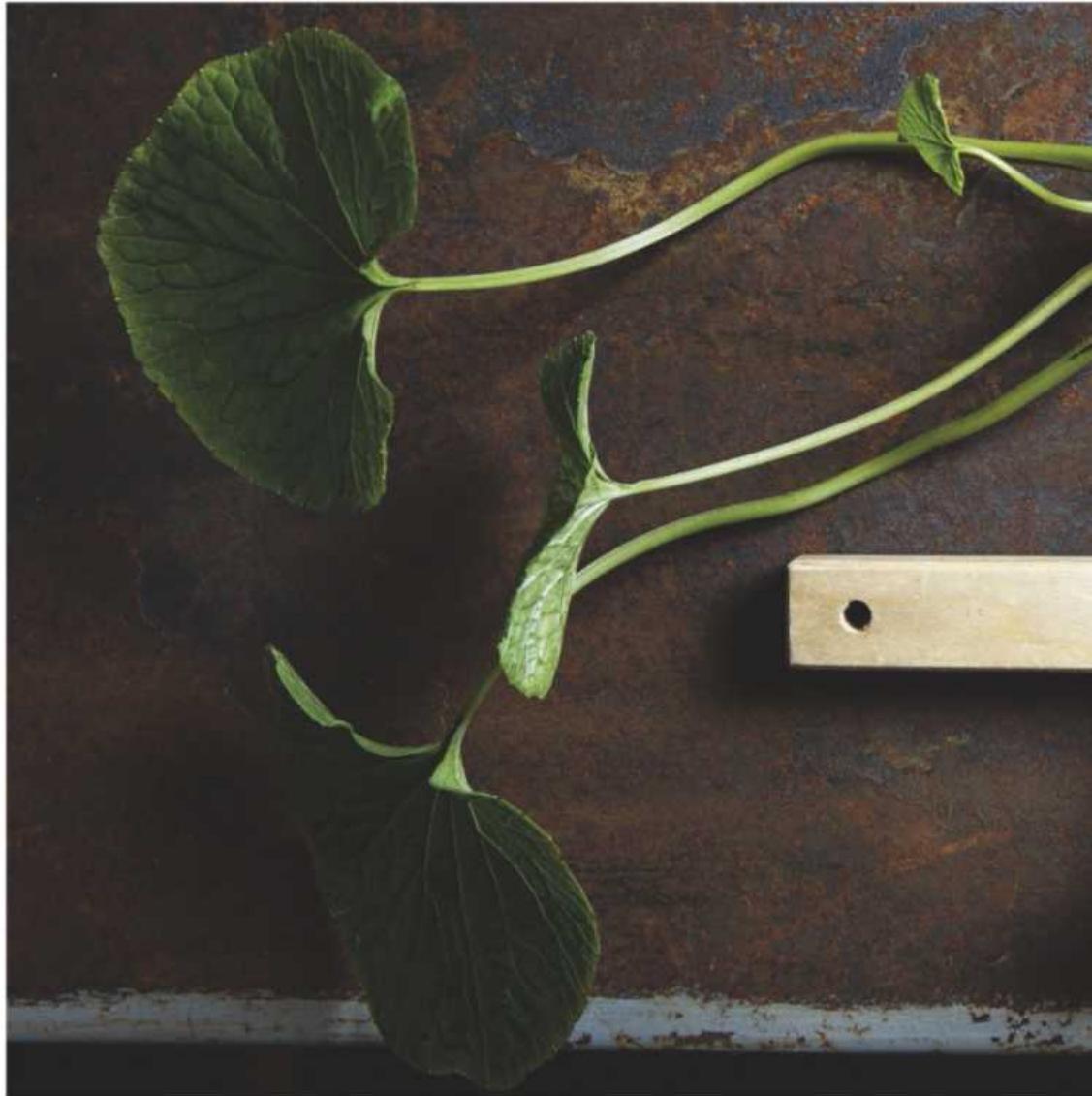
"I would dearly love to go to someone's house and find it sitting on the coffee table with bent corners and soy sauce stains," he tells me over a sencha green tea at his CBD restaurant. "Because it's designed to be beautiful, but it's also designed to be used."

Having eaten several times at MASU by Nic Watt, I was sceptical about whether I could actually cook from the cookbook of the same name. His contemporary Japanese restaurant has an expansive open kitchen, which Nic refers to proudly as "a beautiful theatre" that allows guests to watch their food being prepared expertly at the raw bar, in the kitchen or at the robata charcoal grill (robata means "fireside cooking"). Whether it's crab maki rolls drizzled in yuzu mayonnaise, gooey grilled eggplant with a ginger miso dressing or fresh sashimi on a garden of ice, each dish is carefully crafted and beautifully presented. In other words, it's the kind of food I go out to eat, rather than attempt at home.

And yet, Nic insists that with the right tools anyone can recreate his contemporary Japanese cuisine in their own kitchens – maybe not exactly as it's done at MASU (not many of us have robata grills fitted in our ovens) – but close enough.

"There's no need to be afraid of cooking Japanese food," he says. "As long as you know the techniques and have a basic Japanese pantry you can experiment with recipes and develop your repertoire."

Nic's love affair with Japanese cuisine goes back 20 years, to when he landed a job as a chef at the Park Hyatt in Tokyo as a 23-year-old.



"It was a different world," he says. "The way the food was handled, the kitchens were run... everything was a constant quest for perfection. I fell in love with the food there and particularly with the purity of Japanese cuisine."

He goes on to describe the simple perfection of *otoro* – the most prized part of tuna belly – served simply with fresh wasabi and soy sauce. "It's just three ingredients," he explains, "but globally, every chef recognises it as one of the best flavour combinations there is."

In *MASU by Nic Watt*, Nic introduces us to the essentials: everything you need for a basic Japanese pantry, the tools you'll use for cooking and eating and even some tips on Japanese etiquette (note to self: stop using chopsticks to spear the gyoza). The recipe chapters follow the same structure as a meal at MASU should: starting with sushi and sashimi, ending with cocktails and moving through soups, barbecued meats, desserts and more along the way.

Some of the recipes do look a bit intimidating at first – wagyu maki rolls topped with miso-



poached quails' eggs come to mind – but a read-through reveals that most are actually quite simple to follow.

"I've dialled down the complexities of the recipes and the ingredients have been made more accessible," he says. "Obviously, there was no use in me making this stunning cookbook full of recipes that people can't use."

Most Kiwis are pretty handy with a barbecue, which might be why the 'Cooking with Charcoal' section looks like a good place to begin. Baby back ribs, barbecued chicken wings and roasted cabbage with miso mayo all look fit to become summer staples, as does a recipe for spicy, caramelized grilled pineapple.

"I do the Drunken Pineapple one whenever I go to someone's house for a barbecue" he says. "It's a real crowd-pleaser."

I can believe it. I tell Nic I'll be buying the book for my Mum (a huge fan of Japanese food) for Christmas.

"That's great," he says. "Tell her that just as long as it ends up with those soy stains on it, then I'm happy."



Drunken Pineapple

This drunken pineapple takes the ingredients of a classic piña colada and turns them into a modern dessert. When people ask me to bring a plate to a barbecue, I often bring this. No one expects to be cooking pineapple like this and it's a memorable way to finish a great meal with friends.

1 ripe pineapple
 110 grams demerara sugar
 250ml dark rum
 juice of 1 lime
 1 red chilli, sliced
 125ml umeshu (plum wine)
 1/3 cup honey
 1/3 cup fresh mint and basil tips
 1 red chilli, finely chopped

This is best cooked over a barbecue, so get your coals hot.

Start by trimming off the pineapple skin, then cut the flesh into quarters and trim out the core. You should end up with four skinless and coreless sections of pineapple.

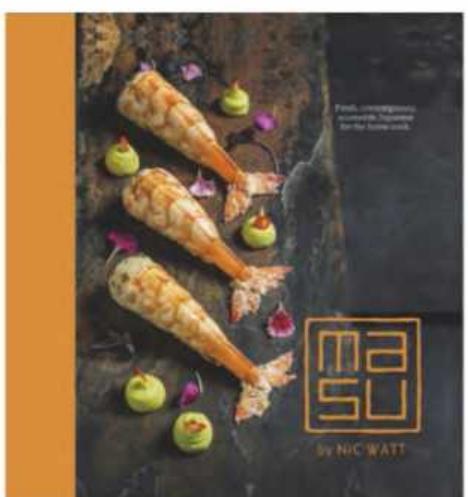
Now make the drunken basting sauce. Add the sugar, rum, lime juice, chilli, umeshu and honey to a medium-sized saucepan and heat to dissolve the sugar and combine all the ingredients. Allow to cool.

Put the pineapple quarters in the drunken solution and allow to marinate for 1 hour.

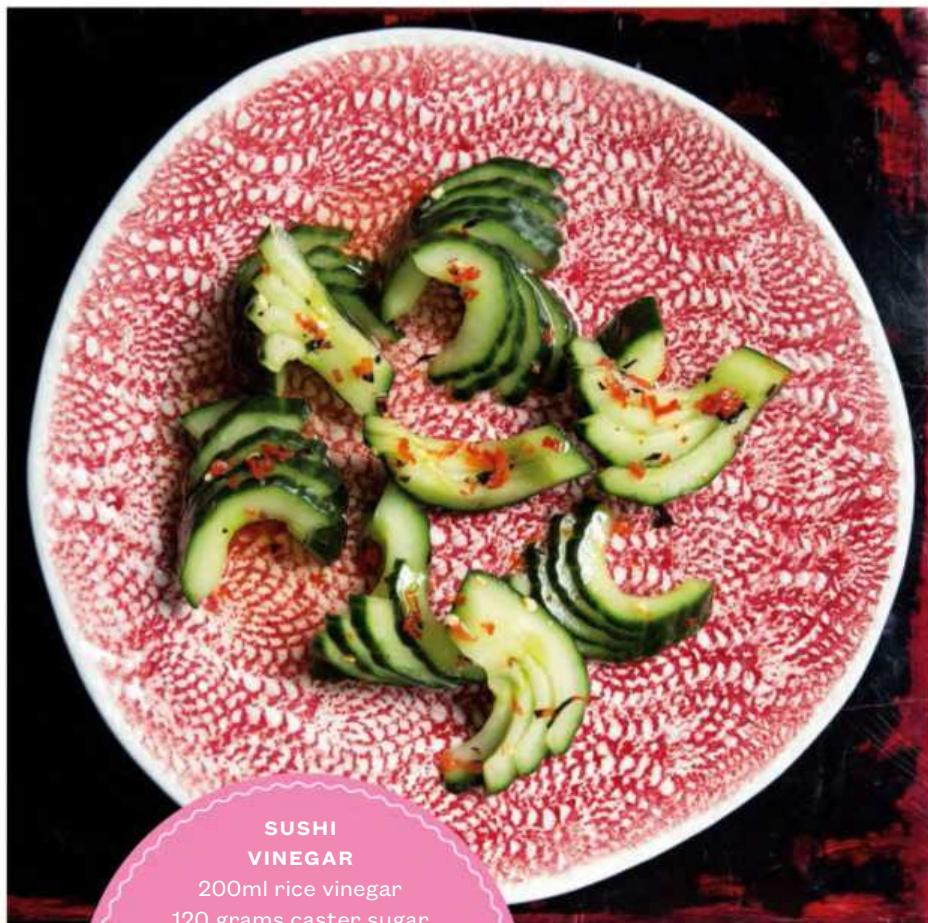
Place the marinated pineapple on the barbecue and grill, getting some nice coloured edges and allowing the honey to catch and caramelise.

Once cooked, slice the quarters into bite-size pieces and brush with a little more marinade to keep the pineapple shiny and fresh. Pile into bowls and scatter the fresh herb tips and sliced red chilli across the top.

Serves 4



All images and recipes extracted from *MASU By Nic Watt*, published by Allen & Unwin. RRP\$59.99. Out now.



SUSHI VINEGAR

200ml rice vinegar
120 grams caster sugar
20 grams sea salt
1 x 10cm square kombu seaweed

Combine the vinegar, caster sugar, sea salt and kombu in a small saucepan. Heat to dissolve the sugar, then allow to cool.



Nic's Cucumber Chilli Pickle

This super-quick and super-tasty little number goes with almost any grilled food. It's a great recipe to have up your sleeve and only takes 15 minutes.

1 telegraph cucumber
2 pinches sea salt
1 long red chilli
100ml sushi vinegar (see opposite)

Halve the cucumber and use a spoon to scrape out the seeds. Slice the cucumber into bite-size chunks.

Sprinkle with sea salt and allow to stand for 10 minutes. The water will be drawn out of the cucumber and it will soften.

While the cucumber is softening, blacken the whole chilli over an open flame. Finely chop it all, seeds and blackened skin, to a coarse paste.

Wash the salt off the cucumber, pour over the vinegar and add the blackened chilli paste. Mix and serve. **Makes 1 small bowl**

Pork and Kimchi Gyoza

Hot and tasty gyoza are a staple in almost all Japanese izakaya – the perfect snack with beer or sake. There are so many variations of gyoza; try swapping the pork for prawns in this recipe.

Gyoza

200 grams pork mince
200 grams kimchi, shredded
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon mirin
1 green chilli, finely chopped
6 gyoza wrappers

To serve

1/4 cucumber
60ml sushi vinegar (see opposite)
rice bran oil for cooking
1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds

Simply combine the pork mince, kimchi, soy sauce, mirin and chilli for the filling.

Add a tablespoon of filling to each gyoza wrapper. Dab your finger in water and run it around the edge of the wrapper, then fold it in half and pinch the edges to form your gyoza. Repeat with the remaining filling and wrappers.

Halve the cucumber and scrape the seeds out with a spoon. Slice thinly and marinate in the sushi vinegar for 10 minutes.

Heat a frying pan to medium with a touch of rice bran oil. Pan-fry the gyoza until lightly coloured on the base, then add 1/2 cup of water and cover with a lid to steam through. The wrappers should have cooked clear and the water steamed out.

Serve with the pickled cucumber and toasted sesame seeds. **Makes 6 gyoza**

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In season: berries

Bright, fragrant berries are the jewels of summer's fruit basket. JULIE BIUSO has delicious ideas for making the most of these little gems.

Ofall the berries – and I use the term loosely as we all do to include strawberries, blackberries, boysenberries and raspberries which are not true berries botanically – I love raspberries the most. They smell of hot summer days and earth after a shower of rain. I love their vibrant colour and the way their juice bleeds through cream, ice cream, sponge cake and meringues, but most of all I love the juicy, mouth-filling tangy taste.

Raspberries are generally too sour to eat without sweetening. Caster sugar will do the trick, but icing sugar has the added effect of thickening the juices while also sweetening them. If raspberries are puréed (run through a sieve to catch the seedy bits) then sweetened with icing sugar, you'll have a classic coulis. It can transform a dessert – just think what it does for peaches and ice cream (peach Melba), making a fresh tangy counterpoint to richness and making peaches taste sweeter. Bring on chocolate, meringues, cream, crème brûlée, a fruit fool... they're all the better for a spoonful of luscious, velvety raspberry coulis.

Raspberries have a short shelf life, around 4-6 days from picking. The central white core is generally removed during harvest, leaving them hollow and easily squashed. Some packers now leave the core in, but even so, raspberries are delicate.

Blueberries are much harder. Look for nice plump ones with

a dusty bloom. They can be piled one on top of the other without any damage and are good keepers too – about 10 days from picking. They freeze well and, like all frozen berries, can be added frozen to a smoothie. A pale pastel-coloured smoothie is pretty, but it's not a good look in muffins and cakes. Add frozen blueberries to a batter at the end of mixing to prevent turning the batter purple.

When it comes to strawberries, the best strawberry is one that is grown near you. Strawberries that have travelled long distances have usually been picked before they are ripe and never catch up in sweetness. Give them the sniff test. If they smell fragrant, they'll probably taste of strawberries. If they smell of nothing, that's probably what they will taste of.

speed and brown sugar to give a pleasant caramel flavour. Caster sugar produces a more sparkling glaze, but takes longer to dissolve.

When buying berries, check the underside of punnets to ensure there is no telltale bleeding and that berries are free of mould and ensure a top layer of berries is not hiding squishy ones underneath. Unless you plan to use berries soon after purchase, remove them from any packaging. Transfer strawberries, blackberries, boysenberries and raspberries to a shallow tray lined with paper towels, then drape with more paper towels. Put a second layer of berries in the hollows between the first layer of fruit and cover with paper towels. This stops bruising and the paper absorbs moisture (moisture encourages

TIP: If strawberries are lacking in flavour, add a splash of lemon juice; the contrast makes them taste sweeter.

"When it comes to strawberries, the best strawberry is one that is grown near you."

If strawberries are lacking in flavour, and we all get caught out, add a splash of lemon juice; the contrast makes them taste sweeter. Balsamic vinegar adds an interesting sweet-sour tang, but add it just before serving or the strawberries will turn brown. Likewise with pomegranate syrup: add just a little and just before serving. Orange juice is also good, making the strawberries taste fruitier. Mixing them with tangy berries such as raspberries works the same magic.

To sweeten sliced or halved strawberries, use icing sugar for

mould). The best place to keep berries is in a vegetable crisper because it is cool and dry. Bring to room temperature before serving to improve taste and texture.

If berries are soft and look as if they might deteriorate, transfer to a bowl and stir in icing sugar. They'll soften, but the sugar will preserve them for 2-3 days. Don't try this with strawberries because it will make them mushy.

Something many of us remember fondly from our childhoods is visiting a 'pick-your-own' berry farm. It was a great way to gorge on just-picked

berries while getting a bit of exercise and provided berries to freeze or dehydrate, or turn into jam. A dry fine day is ideal for picking as wind and dust make berries dirty, rain makes them swell and dilutes flavour and humidity makes them soften more quickly. Look for plump, evenly-coloured perfectly ripe berries. Berries will not ripen once picked, so avoid strawberries with white caps under the leaves, or greenish blackberries.

Finally, the usual conundrum: to wash or not to wash? Washing dilutes flavour. Simple fact. It makes strawberries swell and taste watery. It makes raspberries soften. If berries are stored after washing, they will rot more quickly. I'm not saying not to, but if you must wash them, do so just before using, with the minimal amount of water, and pat them dry with paper towels.

For more of Julie Biuso's recipe ideas visit Shared Kitchen at www.sharedkitchen.co.nz





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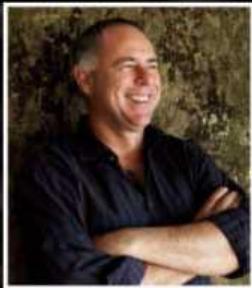
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Brent Marisco

"When I went in search of my ancestry I never expected to uncover a story on medieval intrigue. But there they were: the de Marisco family lived on Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel in the 12th and 13th centuries. They fell in and out of favour with the English monarchy and it's this family history that inspired The King's Series. I hope you enjoy discovering each wine – and the food matches we've made for them – as much as I enjoyed creating them."

The King's A Sticky End

William de Marisco was outlawed by King Henry III in 1235 and fled to Lundy Island where he turned to piracy. William was captured and executed by being hung, drawn and quartered – a sticky end indeed.

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**CLOCKWISE
FROM LEFT:**
Cameron Douglas
MS puts aspiring
sommeliers through
their paces during
recent Court of
Master Sommeliers
exams in Auckland;
candidates must
complete a blind
tasting as part of
the exam process.

Master of the glass

It's regarded as one of the most difficult exams in the world, yet you've probably never heard of it. Cameron Douglas MS tells VICTORIA WELLS why becoming a Master Sommelier was well worth the blood, sweat and tears.

It bugs me if someone can't pull a cork out of a bottle of wine," says Cameron Douglas. "If you're employed in a position you should take ownership and do the job to the best of your ability. So many people go into the hospitality sector and think 'All I have to do is take the food order and deliver the food, take the beverage order and deliver the beverage.' If that's their attitude they're in the wrong industry."

Pulling a cork out of a bottle of wine is something at which Cameron Douglas MS excels. As a Master Sommelier he could also present (decant if required) and serve it, recommend a suitable food pairing and discuss the wine's characteristics and history. You could even blindfold him and switch the bottle and he'd still be able to tell you what the new wine was, its country of origin, the region in which the grapes were grown and the vintage.

Cameron is one of just 227 Master Sommeliers in the world; one of three in the Southern Hemisphere and the only one in New Zealand. They are all members of the Court of Master Sommeliers, which was established in 1969 in the UK and operates in the USA too. It was created to "encourage improved standards

of beverage service in hotels and restaurants". The word 'sommelier' (pronounced soh-mell-YAY) derives from the early 19th century French for 'butler' and refers traditionally to a wine waiter.

While anyone with a certain level of beverage knowledge can call themselves a sommelier, only those who have passed the Court's first level exam can wear its pin, identifying them as a certified sommelier with knowledge spanning wine, beer, cocktails, sake and fortified wines.

Becoming a Master Sommelier is the highest ranking and candidates must pass four examination levels: Introductory, Certified, Advanced and Master. Each level contains a section in Theory, Service and Blind Tasting, which increase in difficulty exponentially at each stage. While up to 90 per cent of candidates pass the Introductory level, only two to three per cent of those sitting the invitation-only Masters level will succeed. "I failed my Masters exam three times and I passed on the fourth," says Cameron matter-of-factly. "It is very rare indeed that somebody will pass on the first time. There are people who have not passed that exam after trying eight, nine, 10 times."

Photography by Mark Heaslip





THIS PAGE: Those working towards qualifications from the Court of Master Sommeliers must pass the first three levels before they can be invited to sit the the notoriously difficult Masters exam, which has a pass rate of just two to three per cent.



Discovering a passion for wine early in his hospitality career, Cameron had been working as a sommelier at renowned Auckland restaurant Vinnies for eight years before a customer told him about the Court of Master Sommeliers. He sat his Introductory exam in Las Vegas in 2001 and knew it was just the beginning.

"There are a lot of people who enter the programme at Introductory and are very happy [with just that]," says Cameron. "You've demonstrated theory skill, you understand the process of tasting wines blind and you've demonstrated basic service skills: you can actually pull a cork out of a bottle of wine, which is becoming a rare skill in New Zealand, given the propensity for screwtop closures.

"One of the trends internationally – especially in the US and the UK – is that restaurants won't employ anyone, particularly when it comes to the beverage side of service, without a minimum credential [like that]."

For Cameron, the desire to reach the top of his profession resulted in a six year journey of study to finally becoming a Master in 2007.

The 2012 documentary film, *Somm*, follows three men in the US as they prepare to sit their Master Sommelier examinations. The lengthy tasting sessions and endless study of thousands of flashcards with seemingly obscure questions about Greek grape varieties or specific villages within German winegrowing regions give a glimpse into the depth of knowledge required of candidates.

Cameron says the Theory section is wide-ranging. "It's minimum and maximum alcohol levels, winemaking, harvest ratios and expected sugar levels; and when you've got all the countries around the world that make wine, then you have to know a lot about a lot in order to address the questions in those exams."

The Blind Tasting section is renowned for its difficulty. Candidates must identify six wines within 25 minutes, providing the varietal, country, region, sub-region if applicable, vintage and quality level. "It's a deductive analysis," explains Cameron. "Once you touch the first glass the clock starts. It's very difficult because there are a lot of classic wines around the world. At Advanced level you should be getting three, if not four or five correct, and at Masters level five if not six correct."

The service section requires a deft touch. Candidates must engage four to five tables in service, each one with at least two Masters on it. "You approach it as you would any customer in any restaurant around the world," says Cameron. "They're there to put you through your paces. At Masters level it isn't about technical skill – although that is checked – it's about using the theory of wine to sell wine, to do expert wine and food pairing, to discuss the price of a wine without upsetting the customer."

Ironically, many of those who achieve MS status leave the restaurant floor. "We end up being qualified to take a position in a company that might have a wine director, or it's a distribution company that needs

someone with a Master Somm skill-base to work for them." Cameron is a senior lecturer in Professional Wine Studies and Beverage Management at Auckland University of Technology, and has his own wine consultancy. His clients include Michelin-starred The Musket Room in New York, as well as Meredith's in Auckland, he trains staff, writes for industry magazines, and judges in New Zealand, Australia and the UK.

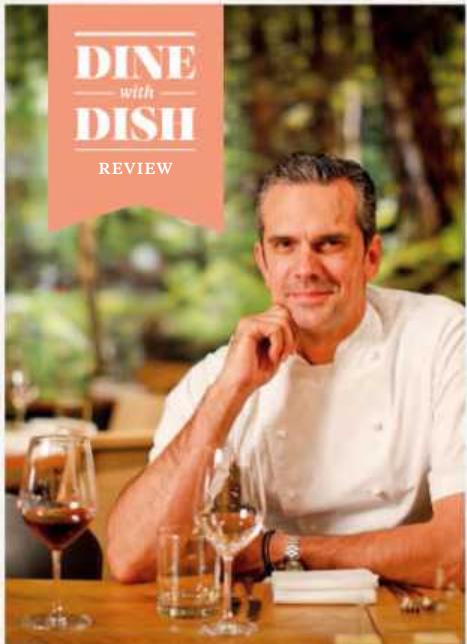
"One of the great feathers in my cap in 2015 has been becoming the Chair of Judges for the New Zealand panel at Decanter World Wine Awards in London, which is the largest wine competition in the world," says Cameron. "I wouldn't have got that if it wasn't for an MS credential."

He has just been elected to the Board of Directors of the Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas and is also the New Zealand representative; conducting exams here and assisting with those in Australia. In July, 17 of 22 candidates passed the Introductory exam in Auckland, and 12 of 17 passed the Certified. Cameron is now planning the 2016 exams and hopes to see many more aspiring sommeliers.

"That's one thing I think that somms need in New Zealand and that's a fire in the belly to learn, grow, develop and be the best they can possibly be, rather than just do a job," he says. "I want people to know they can get this great credential; it opens doors."

Find out more at

www.courtofmastersommeliers.org



THE WINE & FOOD

Gordon Russell shares his thoughts on the matches:



A celebration of iconic New Zealand wine and food with **ESK VALLEY WINE AND RATA**

The casual sophistication of Queenstown's Rata restaurant was the setting for exceptional wines from Esk Valley's Senior Winemaker Gordon Russell matched with superb food created by Josh Emett.

Rata's stunning interior draws on iconic elements of New Zealand landscape – from the wall-size photograph of rata trees to salt dishes made from local river stones – making it a fitting environment in which to enjoy the best of wine and food our country produces.

Esk Valley winemaker, Gordon Russell, described growing the different varieties of grapes in the Hawkes Bay region and the natural yeast fermentation that occurs in the winemaking process as, "Our own expression of place".

Fittingly, Josh Emett and his team created a seasonal menu using fresh produce from small producers in the local region, including merino lamb, stinging nettle and miner's lettuce. The flavours of each dish were carefully considered matches that perfectly complemented each of the superb wines from the Esk Valley collection.

Esk Valley is renowned for its premium hand-crafted wines made in one of the oldest wineries in



Hawkes Bay. Winemaker Gordon Russell creates wines that are both elegant and sophisticated and which truly reflect the character of Esk Valley's individual vineyards.

Gordon is one of New Zealand's most recognised winemaking identities with his passionate approach to winemaking and the enormous success he has achieved with his wines in competitions.

The Esk Valley Estate is nestled in the Hawkes Bay area of Bay View. The unique wines crafted there are made using traditional methods and local knowledge to bring out the best of every vintage.

TUNA, CRUDO SMOKED OYSTER, KIMCHI, RICE CRACKER

Matched with Esk Valley Gimblett Gravels, Hawkes Bay Verdelho 2014

"This was a great start to the evening's proceedings. The subtle tuna, oyster and umami flavours were a great match with the zesty citrus flavours and full body of our Verdelho. This Portuguese variety is always a hit with seafood dishes and this was no exception."



MARLBOROUGH KING SALMON, KOHLRABI, ASPARAGUS, PRESERVED LEMON, MINER'S LETTUCE

Matched with Esk Valley Winemakers Reserve Chardonnay 2014

"The richness and complexity of our Winemakers Reserve Chardonnay was the perfect match for the salmon and its condiments. Not only pretty to look at but bright, refreshing and delicious."



DISH GUIDE

Festive fizz

The presents are wrapped, the ham's in the oven – time to pop the cork on a bottle of bubbles and let the party begin. YVONNE LORKIN raises a glass to the best sparkling wines for the festive season.

There's nothing more torturous than trying to whittle down dozens and dozens of sensational sparkling wines to just a few favourites for the Christmas issue. New Zealand produces a dizzying array of sophisticated sparkling wines, but Kiwis are also huge fans of bubbles from all corners of the globe; be it the aristocrats of France's Champagne region, the chalky dry, clean-cut cavas of Spain, the light, floral proseccos of Italy, or indeed magic Méthodes from across the ditch.

There are a number of ways to produce sparkling wine, but the very best are made in the *méthode traditionnelle*, where the delicate bubbles are produced by base wine going through a secondary ferment in the same bottle from which it is eventually served.

So, with the best in mind, we've chosen some fantastic examples that we hope you'll find time to treat yourself to this Christmas.

1 Taittinger Prélude Grands Crus Brut NV (\$129)

This is made from the 'first pressings' of the fruit harvested from the Taittinger Grand Cru vineyards and is crafted from equal parts chardonnay and pinot noir. Aged for five years on lees, it is a seriously sophisticated, pillow-perfect sip. Tiny beads form delicately twisting necklaces in the glass and aromas of applewood smoke, pancake batter and cashew nuts waft forth. Lemony and layered with oyster shell complexity, it has a perfectly balanced palate and creamy intensity on the finish.

2 Champagne Collet Rosé Brut NV (\$119)

Located in Ay in the heart of the Champagne region, the House of Collet began in 1921 and its art deco aesthetic has remained ever since.



The rosé has a vibrant copper-pink hue and is perfumed with berry bagels, bright cashew, cherry and beeswax. On the palate it has freshness and fruity vibrancy, yet there's a solid creamy weight from four years on lees before disgorging. Smooth and sexy.

3 No.1 Family Estate Reserve Cuvée Blanc de Blancs NV (\$90)

Produced by New Zealand's High Priest of pretty-darn-amazing-sparkling, Mr Daniel Le Brun, this is the result of small amounts of their No.1 cuvée being carefully cellared for an extended time to be released as a 'Reserve'. This 100 per cent chardonnay has intense lemon-biscuit aromatics, soft citrus pith in the mid-palate and a long, luxuriously creamy finish. It's an extremely well-crafted wine.

4 Villa Sandi, Vigna la Rivetta Brut, DOCG Valdobbiadene Superiore di Cartizze NV (\$63)

This is probably the longest wine name ever and is also more than a mouthful if you're looking for outstanding Italian prosecco. A pale straw colour with tiny, delicate bead and intense spring florals in the glass, this crisp, dry sparkler also boasts fresh apple, honey and peach on its spritzy palate. Sensational.

5 Quartz Reef Méthode Traditionnelle Vintage 2010 (\$40)

Produced organically and biodynamically by Rudi Bauer down in Bendigo, this southern star has soft smoky, flinty aromas and a rich nutty, marshmallow-like texture in the mid-palate. Very precise and cleansing it is too.



6 **House of Arras Brut Elite NV (\$34.99)**
With its cool coastal climate, Tasmania has racked up an impressive pedigree of sparkling wine production and we're fortunate to be able to access a number of them on our shores. This deliciously smooth example sources fruit from the Pipers River, Derwent Valley and Coal River Valley and shows roast Brazil nut and cashew characters on the nose followed by a rich, supremely satisfying mouthfeel.

7 **Hunter's MiruMiri Brut NV (\$26.99)**
With its older brother, the MiruMiri Reserve 2010, crowned New Zealand's Best Sparkling Wine at the 2015 Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships in London, this sparkler has a lot to live up to – but it does and in spades. The blend of

chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier boasts citrus and tangy peach flavours, bounce and buoyancy on the palate and a rich, toasty hazelnut-like finish.

BEST VALUE EVERYDAY FIZZ

8 **Lindauer Classic Brut Cuvée NV (\$15.99)**

If you're looking to win friends and influence people on a budget, then this wine ticks every box. It may surprise you to know that this budget stunner wins gold medals at awards shows year after year. The copper-coloured wine, scented with berry brioche and oozing toasty, nutty notes, is just delicious and very champagne-like. Elegant yet rich and generous – it's hard to believe they can make this for the price.

9 **Brancott Estate Brut NV (\$17.99)**

I love the good, honest, classic flavours happening in this wine, which consistently over-delivers for the price. Think creamy, toasty aromas, a squeak of citrus, beautifully balanced acidity and a long, elegant mouthfeel. Just delicious.

10 **Verde Chardonnay Pinot Noir Brut NV (\$21)**

This gold medal-winning blend of Gisborne-grown chardonnay and pinot noir is outstanding value for money. Alluring breadcrust and lemon shortbread aromas lead to a beautifully complex creamy palate and a deliciously generous mouthfeel. It's just super-lovely to drink. ☺



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Dessert & fortified wines

The *Dish* Tasting Panel indulges its sweet tooth with an array of the country's finest stickies and fortified wines.

Here at *Dish* we adore a good sweet, sticky wine. In fact we are huge champions of anything resembling a sweet treat, so it was understandably exciting times when the call was made to highlight New Zealand's most delicious dessert and fortified wine styles for our Christmas issue. A whopping 65 entries were received and our judges assembled at AUT with excited tastebuds but trembling teeth (this is not the sort of tasting you want to be doing if you haven't been to the dentist recently).

Limiting the appreciation of these wines just to dessert time is terribly unfair though, according to *Dish* wine writer Yvonne Lorkin. "Kiwis have a habit of hiding these wines away (often in the fridge – eek!) and not bringing them out until the end of their big, often very boozy, dinner parties. Brains are too foggy and taste buds too tired to really appreciate them. How about opening the bottle right at the beginning of the evening? Give everyone a sip or two – the sweetness will excite the palate, making you eager for good food and wine and then you'll still have enough in the bottle to give everyone a taste at the end of the meal."

Riesling appears to be the star of the majority of New Zealand's premium sweet wines, followed closely by Semillon. However, the likes of Sauvignon Blanc and Gewürztraminer made a sneaky run for the winning scores this time. "The Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon blends were interesting in that they mirrored the unique aspects of New Zealand's most famous dry wine style, but brought it to the customer in a different package," noted judge Meg Abbott-Walker. "This seems to me to be a potentially successful approach to encouraging the New Zealand sauvignon blanc fanatic into trying dessert wine. I do, however, think that given these are the grapes responsible for some of the world's greatest sweet wines, there is room for deeper, more complex wines to be



made using these varieties in New Zealand."

Our judges were looking for wines with balance: wines that had enough sweetness to feel decadent, but also with the zesty, refreshing acidity to keep it clean and vibrant.

So how do these wines end up so sweet? There are three main methods: encouraging *botrytis cinerea* infection of the grapes on the vine (noble rot); delaying the harvest of ripe grapes (late harvest) and freezing the grapes (ice wine).

Many winemakers feel botrytis produces better balanced wines and on the shelf those bottles with 'botrytis' or 'noble rot' on the label are a wee bit pricier.

So what is botrytis? It's a fungus. If botrytis spores take hold in the vineyard during periods of high humidity and it's uncontrolled, the results can be disastrous because the grapes will rot. However, if suitable conditions prevail (misty mornings, clear fine days, low humidity) and the botrytis is controlled, it can create magic in a bottle.

Botrytis dehydrates the berry, increasing its natural sugar concentration. It also metabolises the tartaric acid present, which helps maintain the acid balance and it increases glycerol levels, which results in wines with a more 'silky' mouthfeel. The berries end up looking like

dusty grey, mouldy raisins – heinously ugly but containing precious little drops of liquid gold inside.

One of the great misconceptions about stickies is that they're loaded with alcohol. Not true. As a rule they'll contain between eight and 12 per cent alcohol – less than most dry whites. Another misconception is that they're made by adding sugar to a wine – also wrong. The theory is to concentrate the natural sugars present in the grapes and then to avoid fermenting it all away into alcohol.

Speaking of alcohol, sadly, there were barely a handful of fortified wines entered (Port, sherry and liqueur styles), which could indicate that New Zealand isn't ready to embrace the renewed international interest in these. Or, as Meg Abbott-Walker suggests, perhaps our cooler climate is to blame, as fortified wines require a certain level of intensity, which seems to come from warmer climates. "Or perhaps, generally speaking, we've moved away from choosing high-alcohol wines as the way to finish a meal and winemakers are aware of this," she notes.

Regardless, the wines that came out on top here are a smorgasbord of sweet styles that showcase what nature, science and skill can accomplish; each one is sinfully good.

THE JUDGES



YVONNE LORKIN
Dish drinks writer



LIZ WHEADON
*General Manager,
Glengarry NZ*



**MEG ABBOTT-
WALKER**
Sommelier at Masu

RATING SYSTEM:

GOLD ★★★★

Superb. Strongly recommended.

SILVER ★★★

A cut above the rest in quality.

BRONZE ★★

A good-quality crowd pleaser.

(NB: all wines are judged blind and the scores of judges for their own wines cannot exceed those of other judges.)



Look for the *Dish* Tasting Panel selection sticker, which can be worn by our top wines.

With thanks to Janet Blackman and Cameron Douglas from the Professional Wine Studies Department and the AUT School of Hospitality and Tourism. For more on the programmes in hospitality, food and beverage, and hotel management visit www.aut.ac.nz

Water kindly supplied by Antipodes.



SPIEGELAU
THE CLASS OF GLASS

DISH TASTING PANEL

Dessert & fortified wines

TOP WINES OF THE TASTING

1. BRANCOTT ESTATE

**Letter Series 'B' Late Harvest
Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2014**

(\$35.99) ★★★★

Wow! No mistaking the grape responsible for this fantastically luscious, unputdownable glass of wine. Swoon-inducing aromas of passionfruit curd, guava, sweet pea and intense tropical notes leap out of the glass. Yvonne and Meg noted extremely juicy acidity and a tangy, marmalade-like mid-palate. It's an incredibly pure, concentrated style with great balance and a lingering driven finish, according to Liz.

"We target a block which is managed for the Brancott Estate Chosen Rows programme," says chief winemaker Patrick Materman. "It's on low vigour rootstock, pruned to two canes, shoot thinned and then bunch thinned, giving a small crop with real flavour concentration. We cut the canes when the fruit gets to around 23 Brix (when we would normally harvest this fruit for table wine). The fruit is then left fully bird-netted to protect it as it raisins on the vine. The fruit is harvested six to eight weeks later at around 42 Brix."

2. FRAMINGHAM

**F Series Marlborough Gewürztraminer
VT 2014 (\$40)** ★★★★

This is gewürztraminer, but not as we know it. VT stands for 'vendange tardive', which means 'late harvest' in French – so the grapes have been left on the vine much later than they would normally be harvested; until they start to shrivel and concentrate into lusciously sweet spiced toffee, candied mandarin, punchy spice and magical musky flavours. It's completely decadent and an absolute sin to drink – winemaker Andrew Hedley is an evil genius.

3. AKARUA

**Central Otago Alchemy Ice 2013
(\$40)** ★★★★

"Creamy macadamia-like nuttiness", "dramatic intensity, drive, power and precision" and "honeysuckle, buttered toast and bursting with sweetness" were just a sample of our judges' notes for this superb ice wine. A 100 per cent Riesling ice wine, it is made by blast chilling the fruit before fermentation to increase the sugar content and the result is just divine. It's vibrant, tangy and taut, yet has creamy honeyed notes on the finish.



4. SPY VALLEY

Iced Sauvignon Blanc 2014 (\$21.90)

★★★★★ BEST BUY

The Spy Valley team revealed that the fruit for this wine had been hand-picked on a cold, frosty morning after an almost perfect noble rot infection and the raisined grapes were slowly pressed to French oak barrels and a small tank for fermentation over seven months. The result is a wine boasting a curious aromatic mix of peaches and Weetbix, followed by luscious apricot, sweet tea and guava notes. "Great balance and length," commented Liz, while Meg noted pastry and glazed baked fruit complexity.

5. SAINT CLAIR

Awatere Valley Reserve Noble Riesling 2013 (\$28.90) ★★★★

Glossy and golden in the glass with classic candied citrus, spiced honeycomb, beeswax and toasted stonefruit characters made this an instant hit with the judges. Bright acidity and dried apple and fig characters add complexity and density to the finish. A sensational example that cries out for a shard of salty Parmesan dipped in honey.

6. PEGASUS BAY

FINALE Noble Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2011 (\$37) ★★★★½

This is an 'out there' style, with our judges loving the crazy, toasty complexity – but it was so different we asked winemaker Matt Donaldson to explain how he'd made it. "2011 was the easiest ever year to make noble wine," he says. "A warm summer, a long dry autumn and three consecutive cycles of rain

meant a clean and even botrytis infection took hold. The ensuing norwest winds ensured that the berries shrivelled perfectly. After two years in barrel the semillon came into balance nicely so we bottled some as a straight Semillon FINALE before taking the rest out of barrel into stainless steel, blending it with 10 per cent sauvignon blanc." This blend is an unusual biscuity style with preserved citrus, dried tropical fruit and a Madeira-esque character. Barrel aging gives the wine walnut-like astringency.

7. FRAMINGHAM

Noble Marlborough Riesling 2015 (\$40)

★★★★½

The judges all agreed this wine had an impressively juicy green apple and lime edge to a rich, peach-driven palate. "Light, lean, refreshing and focused," commented Meg, while Liz also felt it had great acid balance and drive on the finish. Yvonne loved its tangy generosity.

8. RIVERBY ESTATE

Noble Riesling 2013 (\$39) ★★★★½

"Poached quince, sweet grapefruit and a lovely spicy touch combined with good weight, texture and zingy acidity on the palate," noted Meg. Yvonne and Liz were impressed with its character, fresh honeyed lift and refreshing sweetness on the finish.

9. WOOING TREE

Tickled Pink 2014 (\$38) ★★★★½

Super-pretty candy pink in the glass and boasting a nose bursting with raspberry, cherry and creaming soda characters

alongside a herbal hint make this lovely indeed. It's an unusual style – the Wooing Tree team believes it was the first to craft a late harvest pinot noir in New Zealand – and it's become a bit of a cult wine since.

10. SEIFRIED

Winemakers Collection Sweet Agnes Riesling 2013 (\$32) ★★★

The team at Seifried is seriously good at making sticky-style wines and this is no exception. "Hugely aromatic, fresh lime, roast lemon, incredibly intense," stated Liz. "Very smart: you seriously want a second glass". Our other judges agreed, noting its toasted citrus and stonefruit lift, punchy acidity and concentrated sweetness. Tangy, taut and terrific.

11. SAINT CLAIR

Godfreys Creek Reserve Noble Riesling 2013 (\$28.90) ★★★

With its alluring honeysuckle, toasty tropical fruit and caramelised apple and raisin notes, this wine is delicious. "Plump, gently lingering acidity" added to the complexity on the finish, noted Meg. "It's a very complete wine," said Yvonne, "satisfying and saucy."

12. WAIPARA

River Estate Noble Riesling 2013 (\$28)

★★★★

Initially shy apple pie aromas open up after a few swirls of the glass to reveal attractive ginger biscuit notes, pineapple, peach and toffeel citrus. It pays to be patient with this wine – its richness and exotic characters are well worth the wait. ☀





BY THE GLASS

New champagnes to discover, one of New Zealand's top red wines returns and perfect gift ideas for wine lovers – YVONNE LORKIN rounds up the latest from the world of drinks.



NEW KIDS ON THE CORK

Fans of rare, lesser-known champagnes will be keen to check out the burgeoning number of 'Grower Champagnes' that Chris Ayson and business partner Richard (Rico) Starr are bringing into New Zealand via their import company Cave du Cochon.

"It translates to 'Cellar of the Pig,'" says Chris. "It's a tongue-in-cheek dig at some of the elitism around wine." Grower Champagne is artisanal product that's often better value and more interesting than its mainstream equivalent, according to the lads.

"The wines from these small family-owned vineyards struck a chord with us. Unlike the big houses, that aim for consistency at all costs, these growers seek only to be themselves – to express the terroir where their family grows by producing something authentic." Visit www.caveducohon.com

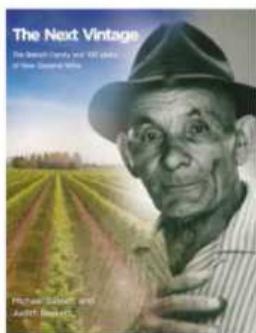


Le Brun Three-Peat

Just as well Daniel Le Brun winemaker Andrew Petrie has strong knees, after having to climb the stage stairs three times to collect gold medals for all three of his sparkling wines at this year's New Zealand International Wine Show. In an exceptional display of consistency, the Daniel Le Brun Brut Non-Vintage, Rosé and 2009 Blanc de Blancs all scored gold medals from around 2100 entries worldwide in the largest wine competition in the country.



We at *Dish* salute Esk Valley's long-time winemaker Gordon Russell for his well-deserved Champion Wine of the Show Trophy at the 15th Annual Hawke's Bay A&P Bayleys Wine Awards last month. His Esk Valley Winemaker's Reserve HB Chardonnay 2014 whipped past hundreds of other entries to claim top spot. I was lucky enough to be a judge at that show and can safely say it's an absolutely top drop.



WHAT'S THE STORY?

Stuck for gift ideas for the wine lover in your life? Two fantastic new books celebrating some serious Kiwi wine history have just hit the shelves.

Wine: Stories From Hawke's Bay (\$65) by Mark Sweet is a rip-roaring account of the history of one of New Zealand's oldest and most highly regarded wine regions. The whakapapa of winemaking in Hawke's Bay is covered, from its foundations in 1836 to the present day.

The photography includes spectacular present day views alongside historical gold from public and private collections. It's a fascinating social history of not just Hawke's Bay, but of wine's evolution across New Zealand. The narrative begins with the early missionaries and pioneers and winds its way through the renaissance of the late 1970s to 1990s and the massive expansion into the multi-million dollar darling that the wine industry is today.

And congratulations to Babich Wines, who are celebrating 100 years with the release of *The Next Vintage* (\$49.95). We simply wouldn't have a modern wine industry in New Zealand were it not for the hard work and vision of pioneers such as Josip Babich, who arrived from Dalmatia and made wine from vines grown above Northland's Kaikino gum fields in 1916. After settling in west Auckland, he and his family worked tirelessly to create one of our best-known wineries, and one that continues to expand both here and overseas.

TAKE IT TO THE BRIDGE

New Zealand's newest appellation, Hawke's Bay's Bridge Pa Triangle Wine Region, is holding its own moveable feast wine festival on Saturday 23rd January. It's a tight-knit region where participating wineries (that are just five minutes down the road from each other) will be connected by a rolling bus service throughout the day. Meet the winemakers and enjoy great food and groovy music at Abbey Cellars, Alpha Domus, Ash Ridge, Hawke's Ridge, Ngatarawa, Paritua and Sileni Estates, alongside masterclasses and food and wine matching. Tickets are available from the Eventfinda website or cellar doors of participating wineries.



HOMAGE RETURNS

November 20th sees Trinity Hill release its flagship syrah, Homage 2013 (\$120), the first Homage release since 2010. Recognised as one of the top red wines New Zealand has ever produced, it has a new look and seasoned 'Homagers' will see it as an entirely different beast. "We think 2013 was an incredibly strong vintage and we only make Homage in the best years," says Chief Winemaker Warren Gibson. "With Homage we also set out to make the best wine we can – so the 2013 is not a 'Gimblett Gravels' labelled wine because we've included 15 per cent hillside fruit and the blend of the two parcels works extremely well. So for the first time, this is the best syrah we've been able to make from our properties – rather than sticking to the 'Gravels'!" With carefully trialled footstomping, plunging and fermentation regimes, the wine has an extra dimension which fans of great syrah will love.

Méthode in their Marlboroughness

A group of 10 highly regarded Marlborough producers take their bubbles so seriously they've banded together to form 'Méthode Marlborough', with the aim of ensuring the quality and heritage of Marlborough's finest méthode traditionnelle.

All Méthode Marlborough wines follow strict criteria: they must be made exclusively from Marlborough-grown Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier as a blend or alone (as these varieties are recognised globally as the benchmark for champagne and méthode traditionnelle producers); and in production, Méthode Marlborough wines must follow the traditional method of secondary fermentation in the bottle, followed by the intricacies of riddling and ageing for a minimum of 18 months on lees. So who's involved? Allan Scott Wines, Cloudy Bay Vineyards, Hunter's Wines, Johanneshof Cellars, Lion Breweries with the Daniel Le Brun range, Nautilus Estate, No 1 Family Estate, Spy Valley, Summerhouse and Tohu Wines.

"The aim of the group is education, education, education!" exclaims Matt Elrick, chairperson of Méthode Marlborough and winemaker at Allan Scott Wines. "From very bogan beginnings I saw the light and converted to champagnes about 17 years ago – I couldn't afford to buy them so I learned how to make them. And here I am today, living in one of the best sparkling wine regions in the world!" Matt and his fellow Marlborough Méthodiers are on a crusade to get that message out. "We want consumers to realise that these Marlborough wines are as good, if not better, than the traditional high-flyers in Champagne. The aim is for consumers worldwide to see Méthode Marlborough on a label and immediately recognise the quality statement."

Cementing the Méthode Marlborough brand has begun in earnest, with Nautilus and No.1 Family Estate already using the name on selected labels instead of the usual 'méthode traditionnelle' moniker – and others will soon follow.

Reason to Celebrate...

Through collaboration, communication and education, we aim to build recognition and respect for the heritage and quality of Marlborough traditional method sparkling wines.



Members...

Allan Scott
Cloudy Bay Vineyards
Hunter's Wines
Johanneshof Cellars
Daniel Le Brun

Nautilus Estate
No 1 Family Estate
Spy Valley
Summerhouse
Tohu Wines



RECIPES

What we're cooking in this issue of Dish



Dish Food Editor
CLAIRE ALDOUS
celebrates the
festive season.

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Turkey, duck or lamb – Julie Biuso has plenty of ideas for a special Christmas menu.

80 PARTY STARTERS

From Crispy Peanut and Lamb Skewers to sweet Mini Donuts with dipping sauces, get the party underway with tasty morsels and drinks to match.

90 FROM THE DEEP

Enjoying seafood fresh from the ocean is one of my favourite parts of summer.

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Handmade gifts add a special touch to the holiday season. Sarah Tuck shares her ideas for what to make and give.

108 CAUSE TO CELEBRATE

Take the fuss out of what to feed a crowd with simple dips, casual platters to share and – of course – a ham!

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Quick, delicious and seasonal, these fuss-free recipes are the perfect solution for weeknight meals.



Recipes and food styling by Claire Aldous
Drink matches by Yvonne Lorkin
Props by Lianne Whorwood
Styling by Fiona Kerr, Lisa Morton and Lianne Whorwood



by JULIE BIUSO

fresh, fancy & festive

From generous platters of duck, lamb or turkey, to a luscious trifle layered with fresh raspberries and lemon cream, JULIE BIUSO has Christmas Day all wrapped up.



CRISPY-SKINNED ROAST DUCK
WITH LYCHEE, WATERMELON
AND WATERCRESS SALAD
[recipe next page]





GRILLED PEACH AND
SALTED RICOTTA SALAD WITH
SHREDDED ROAST CHICKEN

Grilled Peach and Salted Ricotta Salad with Shredded Roast Chicken

A light, fresh dish to impress guests looking for an alternative Christmas dinner. The key is a good chicken – I used a free-range chicken and jellied chicken stock – and it was succulent and tasty.

Chicken	Dressing
1 × size 14 free-range chicken (I used Harmony brand)	½ teaspoon wholegrain mustard
2 fresh bay leaves	1½ tablespoons raspberry or berry fruit vinegar
1 tablespoon melted butter mixed with 1 tablespoon olive oil	4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
400–500ml jellied chicken stock	½ teaspoon salt
flaky sea salt	freshly ground black pepper
Ricotta	2 tablespoons cream, lightly whipped
350 grams good quality ricotta (I used Zany Zeus brand)	
lemon-infused olive oil	Salad
flaky sea salt	3–4 just-ripe peaches
few sprigs of thyme, leaves picked	extra virgin olive oil
	2 baby cos lettuces, leaves separated
	½ cup black olives
	handful small mint leaves

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Chicken: Pat the chicken dry with paper towels, removing any lumps of fat from inside the cavity. Put bay leaves inside, then truss the chicken. Place in a shallow roasting tin that holds it snugly. Brush with the combined butter and oil. Pour 1 cup of chicken stock around the chicken and sprinkle with salt.

Roast for 1½ hours or until cooked through, basting often and adding more stock or water as required so the pan juices don't catch and burn. Transfer to a board and rest for 30 minutes before assembling the salad. Do not wash the roasting dish.

Tilt the roasting dish and scoop off the fat. Place over a medium heat and add ¼ cup stock and bring to the boil. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 210°C.

Ricotta: Slice the ricotta thickly and place in a lined, shallow ovenproof dish. Drizzle with a little lemon oil, sprinkle with salt and thyme leaves. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden on top.

Dressing: Mix the mustard, vinegar, oil and salt together. Add a little black pepper and whisk in the cream.

Salad: Cut off thick rounded slices from the peaches and brush the cut sides with olive oil. Heat a grill pan and cook until grill marks show. Arrange cos leaves on a serving platter or individual plates.

To assemble: Remove the chicken meat from the bones while still warm. Discard un-crunchy skin, bone, gristle and any fat. Keep pieces larger than bite-sized. Top the cos with chicken, olives, mint, peaches and ricotta. Reheat the chicken juices and spoon over the chicken. Whisk the dressing again and spoon over the other ingredients. Serve immediately. **Serves 6**

Crispy-Skinned Roast Duck with Lychee, Watermelon and Watercress Salad

Served warmish, this exotic salad with hints of chilli and lime, shredded kaffir lime leaves and pomegranate seeds explodes in the mouth with summer freshness. It sings 'beach' to me.

Duck	
2 × 2 kilogram oven-ready ducks	½ teaspoon salt
sea salt	20 kaffir lime leaves, ground or very finely chopped
small piece of ginger (as big as your thumb), sliced	2 baby cos lettuces, leaves separated
6 kaffir lime leaves	large bunch watercress, ends trimmed,
Glaze	1 pomegranate (optional), seeds removed
3 tablespoons honey, warm	750 gram watermelon wedge, rind removed and flesh cubed
1 tablespoon lime juice	565 gram tin lychees, drained and halved
1 tablespoon sweet chilli sauce	2 tablespoons snipped chives
To assemble	2 hot red chillies, finely sliced (remove seeds if preferred)
4 tablespoons lemon-infused olive oil	
2 tablespoons lime juice	

Preheat the oven to 140°C.

Duck: Remove giblets from the cavity of each duck. Cut off the parson's nose and remove the fat glands and any extra fat and trim the wing tips. Pat dry. Season each cavity with ¼ teaspoon salt. Place half the sliced ginger and 3 kaffir lime leaves in each cavity.

Prick the skin of each duck thoroughly, all over, with a sharp metal skewer, concentrating on the fatty areas.

Put the ducks breast side up on an oiled rack set in a large roasting tin. Sprinkle with salt. Roast for 2 hours then increase the oven temperature to 190°C. When hot, roast the ducks for a further 25–30 minutes, until lightly golden.

Glaze: Mix the honey, lime juice and chilli sauce in a small bowl and brush over the ducks. Roast for a further 15 minutes, until deeply golden. Cover loosely with foil and rest for 30 minutes.

To assemble: Slice the duck. Cut off the legs by putting a knife between the ball and socket joint. Remove the breast meat and wings by sliding the knife between the breast meat and breastbone and cutting in between the ball and socket joint of the wings. Cut breast meat and leg joints in half, or slice.

Whisk lemon oil, lime juice and salt together in a small bowl. Put cos leaves on two large platters, then the watercress and watermelon. Sprinkle with half the chives and chilli.

Lay duck meat on top, nestling in the lychees. Scatter with the pomegranate seeds, more chives and chilli. Add the kaffir lime leaves to the dressing, whisk and spoon over everything. Serve immediately. **Serves 6**



TURKEY BREASTS WITH
PINE NUT, PRESERVED
LEMON AND FRESH HERB
STUFFING BALLS



Turkey Breasts with Pine Nut, Preserved Lemon and Fresh Herb Stuffing Balls

This is one of the most delicious and tender turkey breast recipes I've cooked. Read the Cook's Tips below carefully, because the trick lies in not overcooking the turkey.

2 single turkey breasts, skinned and boned, weighing about 650 grams each	2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon (or 1 tablespoon dried tarragon)
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed tangelo or orange juice	50 grams butter, melted
1 tablespoon plus 1/2 cup verjuice	2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon creamy Dijon mustard	3 tablespoons plain flour
	1 teaspoon salt
	1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
	1/2 cup chicken stock

Turkey: Mix the orange juice, 1 tablespoon of the verjuice, mustard and half the tarragon in a large sealable bag. Add the turkey and turn to coat. Seal, put the bag in a bowl and refrigerate. *The bowl is in case the bag bursts!*

Marinate for at least 1 hour, but around 6 hours is optimal. Turn the breasts from time to time and bring to room temperature before cooking.

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Brush the turkey breasts with the melted butter then coat in the combined flour and salt, shaking off the excess.

Heat an ovenproof dish, large enough to hold the breasts snugly. Add the butter and once sizzling add the turkey breasts and brown on both sides. Season and scatter over the remaining tarragon. Pour in 1/2 cup verjuice and immediately cover with a lid.

Roast for 25–30 minutes. Pierce the breasts in the thickest part and once the juice runs clear, take them out. Transfer to a carving board and rest uncovered for 10 minutes.

Skim the pan juices, add the stock and cook until syrupy. Slice the breasts thinly against the grain.

Spoon a little pan jus onto a large warmed platter and arrange the turkey on top. Spoon over the remaining jus and serve immediately. **Serves 8**

COOK'S TIPS: In my experience, if you use a turkey timer and cook until the specified temperature for turkey (82–85°C) it will be overcooked, as the residual heat continues cooking it as it stands. I suggest you allow for this and remove the breasts before they hit 74°C, the temperature recommended for safe eating. I remove mine at 72°C because that rises at least a few extra degrees on resting and will most likely end higher. When working out how long to allow for cooking, also consider whether your turkey breasts weigh more than the weight specified in the recipe.

Pine Nut, Preserved Lemon and Fresh Herb Balls

2 tablespoons pine nuts	4 tablespoons panko crumbs
2 tablespoons chopped preserved lemon skin (rinse away pulp, dry, then chop)	1 large egg yolk
350 grams pork mince	350 grams pork mince
To cook	To cook
2 tablespoons olive oil	2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon butter	1 tablespoon butter

Mix everything together in a bowl. Shape into 24 balls, cover and chill.

To cook: Heat the oil and butter in a medium-sized sauté pan over medium heat until sizzling. Add the meatballs and cook until golden, shaking the pan for even browning. Serve hot.

Makes 24

Slivered Asparagus and Green Beans

2 bunches asparagus, trimmed and sliced	1 clove crushed garlic
300 grams green beans, trimmed and sliced	flaky sea salt
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil	fresh nutmeg
	black pepper

Blanch the vegetables separately in boiling salted water, drain and refresh. Dry on paper towels. To reheat, warm all ingredients in a sauté pan and toss through the vegetables.

Crushed Red Potatoes

750 grams red skinned potatoes	flaky sea salt
	butter

Steam the potatoes until tender. Crush roughly with a fork and season with flaky sea salt and lashings of butter.

DO AHEAD: The day before: remove fat from the turkey breasts, mix and roll stuffing balls (keep both covered and refrigerated). On the day: marinate turkey breasts and refrigerate, blanch green vegetables and keep at room temperature.

ROAST LAMB WITH LEMON CRUST
AND DAMSON JUS, PAN-FRIED
GRAPES AND ALMONDS

PEAS WITH
PANCETTA

Roast Lamb with Lemon Crust and Damson Jus, Pan-Fried Grapes and Almonds

Here's a family meal for those wanting more than just a roast.

Potato rosti	60 grams butter, melted
500 grams evenly-sized red-skinned or Agria potatoes, scrubbed	2 teaspoons sea salt
	freshly ground pepper
1½ teaspoons sea salt	1½ tablespoons chopped rosemary
3 tablespoons olive oil	finely grated zest 1 large lemon
1-2 tablespoons butter	
Peas with pancetta	1 cup panko crumbs, blitzed to a fine crumb
500 grams frozen baby peas, rinsed under hot water	1 tablespoon butter
100 gram piece pancetta, thickly sliced then cut into chunks	Jus
1 tablespoon olive oil	1 tablespoon butter
½ cup chopped shallots	2 tablespoons chopped shallots
freshly ground pepper	½ cup slivered almonds
1 tablespoon chopped mint	1 cup firm red grapes, halved
Lamb	1 teaspoon chopped thyme
4 x 350 gram lamb pan roasts	2 tablespoons damson jelly mixed with 4 tablespoons hot water

Potatoes: Steam the potatoes until half cooked. Cool. Peel and refrigerate, preferably overnight. Grate coarsely and sprinkle with the salt. Lightly oil your hands and form into 6 flat cakes about 8cm across. Keep at room temperature for up to 2 hours.

Peas: Cook the peas in boiling salted water for 2 minutes. Drain and refresh. Put pancetta and oil in a saucepan and cook for 5 minutes or until golden. *Watch carefully as the pancetta can darken quickly once the oil gets hot.* Add the shallots, reduce the heat and cook gently for 5 minutes. Add the peas, season lightly and turn the heat off. Reheat gently and add the mint when serving.

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Lamb: Remove fat and silverskin from the lamb roasts. Combine all the ingredients except the breadcrumbs and spread on top of the lamb. Place the crumbs on a shallow plate. Press the buttered side of the lamb into the crumbs. Spread the other side with remaining butter and coat with crumbs. Heat an ovenproof dish (just big enough to hold the roasts) over a medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon of butter and when sizzling, add the lamb, rounded side down. Once golden, turn carefully with tongs then roast in the oven for 15-18 minutes.

Jus: Heat a small sauté pan over medium heat. Add the butter and shallots and cook until golden. Add the almonds and cook until just starting to colour, stirring, then add the grapes. Cook until hot. Add the thyme, season with salt and pepper then add the damson jelly. Remove from the heat. Reheat very gently when required.

Rosti: Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon of butter. When sizzling, add the potato cakes. Cook until golden, turning often and pressing gently to flatten a little. Add a little more butter to keep them sizzling. Sprinkle with sea salt.

To serve: Transfer the lamb to a chopping board, sprinkle with salt and rest for 7 minutes. Slice lamb thinly, arrange on a warm serving platter and spoon over the grape and almond jus. Serve with potato rosti and peas with pancetta. **Serves 6**



BURRATA AND GREENS WITH BURNT BUTTER, SIZZLED SAGE AND CITRUS PEEL
[recipe next page]



BAKLAVA WITH POACHED NECTARINES
[recipe next page]

Burrata and Greens with Burnt Butter, Sizzled Sage and Citrus Peel

This is a delicious all vegetable meal that really looks the part for Christmas Day with its striking green, red and white colours. Instead of serving as a main for four, you could replace the burrata with small balls of buffalo mozzarella and serve eight as a starter.

150 grams frozen broad beans, rinsed under hot water	12 cherry tomatoes, halved sea salt and freshly ground pepper
16 asparagus spears	4 x burrata at room temperature, drained
100 grams broccolini, ends trimmed	1/4 cup chopped toasted hazelnuts
50 grams butter	
zest of lemon, taken off in strips with a zester	To serve lemon wedges
1/2 cup sage leaves, loosely packed	

Cook the broad beans in boiling lightly salted water for 3 minutes. Drain and refresh. Pod the beans and transfer to a dish lined with paper towels. Cover and chill until required.

Trim the asparagus, reserving just the top 7–8cm of each spear. Cut each broccolini stem into several pieces. Cook vegetables separately in gently boiling salted water for 2–3 minutes, until done to your liking. Drain and refresh, then dry on paper towels.

Melt 2 teaspoons of the butter over medium heat in a small sauté pan and add the lemon zest. Cook until golden then transfer to a side plate. Add the sage leaves to the pan and cook until crisp then transfer to the plate. Add the tomatoes to the pan, cut side down, and let them colour. Transfer to a plate and sprinkle with salt. *This can all be done 1 hour ahead.*

To assemble: Heat a small dot of butter in a large sauté pan and gently reheat the greens. Season and transfer to a bowl. Clean the pan, add the remaining butter over a medium heat and cook gently until the butter foams then browns. *The more you brown the butter the nuttier the flavour, but it must not burn.* Aim for a good deep golden brown before the butter develops dark brown flecks.

Carefully transfer the burrata to warmed serving plates. Gently mix the tomatoes through the greens and spoon the vegetables around the burrata. Scatter the sizzled lemon zest and sage leaves over everything then spoon over the burnt butter and top with hazelnuts and a pinch of salt. Serve immediately with lemon wedges. *Serves 4*

PANTRY NOTE: *Burrata* is a fresh Italian cheese – essentially a mozzarella pouch filled with a rich cream. Available from specialty food stores.

Baklava with Poached Nectarines

An impressive dessert (not as sweet as the classic) with a lovely fresh tang from nectarines – or use dark fleshed plums. Make this a day ahead then you can cross ‘dessert’ off your to-do list.

Syrup and nectarines	1 cup finely chopped pistachio nuts
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar	2 cups water
2 small strips orange rind	small piece vanilla pod
2 tablespoons lemon juice	2 teaspoons orange flower water
6 nearly ripe nectarines, halved and stoned	
	Baklava
	1 1/4 cups ground almonds
	1/2 cup finely chopped fresh walnuts
	shallow ovenproof dish, approx 33cm x 21cm, buttered

Syrup: Put the sugar and water in a large heavy-based frying pan over medium heat. Stir to dissolve the sugar, but avoid getting sugar crystals up the sides of the pan. *Wash off any that form with a little hot syrup.* Gently bring to the boil without stirring. Add the orange rind and vanilla pod and boil gently for 5 minutes. Remove the rind and pod and stir in the lemon juice and orange flower water.

Place the nectarines in the pan of hot syrup, cut side up. Bring back to the boil and let it bubble up over the nectarines briefly. Reduce the heat and cook gently for 10–15 minutes, until tender. Spoon hot syrup over the fruit frequently. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the nectarines to a plate and cool. Cut into fat slices and set aside. Spoon off 1/2 a cup of syrup, cool, cover and reserve. Cover the pan of syrup and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 160°C.

Baklava: Put the almonds, walnuts and pistachios in a bowl with the cinnamon and sugar.

Lay 1 sheet of filo pastry on a clean dry surface and brush with butter. Lay another sheet on top and continue to butter and stack the filo until you have 6 sheets prepared. Place the filo in the base of the buttered dish and trim the pastry to fit.

Spread over 1/4 of the nut filling, then top with 3 sheets of buttered and stacked filo and cover with the second quarter of the nut filling. Top with 3 more buttered and stacked sheets of filo and the third quarter of nut filling. Place the nectarines on top, then top with 3 more buttered and stacked sheets of filo and the last of the nut filling. Butter and stack 6 more sheets of filo and put these on top. Trim the filo to fit as you layer it up.

Use the tip of a small sharp knife to carefully cut the surface of the filo into a diamond pattern. Bake for 50–55 minutes until a rich golden colour, top and bottom. Remove from the oven and cool.

To assemble: Once cooled, reheat the syrup remaining in the pan to bubbling, then spoon over the baklava. Leave the baklava to cool completely before slicing into squares for serving with the reserved cooled syrup. Baklava keeps 3 days at room temperature. *Serves 12*



TRIFLE LAYERED WITH LEMON
CREAM AND RASPBERRIES WITH
BABY MERINGUE TOPPING
[recipe next page]

Trifle Layered with Lemon Cream and Raspberries with Baby Meringue Topping

This isn't really a trifle - it's better! I'm not a lover of sweet jelly but I have a soft spot for raspberries, cream and meringue and am always looking for ways to reinvent them. You can use store-bought mini meringues and fresh edible flowers if desired.

Crystallised violets

1 egg white

2-3 dozen small unsprayed edible violets

caster sugar

Mini meringues

2 egg whites

100 grams caster sugar

Butter sponge

200 grams plain flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

125 grams unsalted butter, softened

250 grams caster sugar

2 large (size 7) free-range eggs, at room temperature, lightly beaten together

1/2 cup milk, warmed slightly (it should just feel warm to your little finger)

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

To assemble

3 punnets fresh raspberries

icing sugar

300ml cream, lightly whipped

2 cups lemon curd

100ml limoncello (optional)

freeze-dried raspberry powder (I used Fresh-As brand)

2 x 20cm sandwich tins, greased and lined with baking paper on the bottom and sides

Butter sponge: Sift the flour, baking powder and salt together. Beat the butter until soft then gradually beat in the sugar until light and white in colour. With the machine running, gradually beat in the eggs, adding 2-3 tablespoons of the sifted dry ingredients. Stir in the remaining sifted dry ingredients alternately with the warmed milk mixed with the vanilla extract. Pour the batter into the prepared tins and gently smooth the top with a flat-bladed knife.

Bake for about 25 minutes, until lightly browned on top and pulling away slightly from the sides of the tins. Leave to cool in the tins for 15 minutes, then turn out onto cooling racks lined with baking paper. Remove the lining paper and cool.

To assemble: Crush one punnet of raspberries (use the softest ones) in a bowl with 1 tablespoon icing sugar, to make a juice.

Put the lemon curd in a large bowl and stir, then fold in the whipped cream with a large spoon. *Don't over-work it or the cream will go stiff and buttery.*

To assemble: Cut the sponge into small squares with a serrated knife. Transfer to a large baking dish and sprinkle with the limoncello. Soak for 5 minutes. Using a large glass trifle bowl or individual glasses, layer up sponge cubes, raspberries and juice, and lemon curd cream, ending with lemon curd cream. Top with the mini meringues and dust with icing sugar.

Dust with raspberry powder and dot with crystallised violets.

Serve immediately. **Serves 8 or more**

Crystallised violets: Lightly beat the egg white with a fork. Working with one flower at a time, hold it by the stem and use a small paintbrush to brush each petal with beaten egg white. Drop the flower into a mound of caster sugar and use a small teaspoon to spoon over more sugar until the flower is completely covered. Lift it out and shake off excess sugar. Transfer the flower to a large, shallow container lined with baking paper.

Let the violets dry at room temperature for at least 12 hours. When completely dry, trim the stems then store in an airtight container.

Preheat the oven to 120°C.

Mini meringues: Whisk the egg whites until stiff and can stand in peaks on an upturned whisk. Add 2 tablespoons of the sugar and whisk in for 30 seconds. Sprinkle over the rest of the sugar and fold it in carefully with a large metal spoon.

Fill a piping bag fitted with a plain 'éclair' piping nozzle (the old 1/2" size) and pipe tiny meringues onto two trays lined with baking paper. Bake for about 40 minutes or until the meringues are crisp and will lift off the baking paper without feeling tacky.

Swap the position of the trays once during cooking. Turn the oven off and leave inside until cool. Store in an airtight container.

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

PROPS: Napkin from French Country (www.frenchcountry.co.nz). Plates and glasses from Old Mill Road (contact www.oldmillroad.co.nz for stockists). Candle and candlesticks from Shut the Front Door (www.shutthefrontdoor.co.nz). Decorations from Citta (www.cittadesign.com). **Crispy-Skinned Roast Duck with Lychee, Watermelon and Watercress Salad:** Platter, napkin and star from French Country. Napkin ring from Tessuti (shop.tessuti.co.nz). Sophie Conran for Portmeirion dinner set from the Studio of Tableware (www.thestudio.co.nz). Candle from Shut the Front Door. Decoration from Citta. Servers from Collected by LeeAnn Yare (www.collected.co.nz). **Grilled Peach and Salted Ricotta Salad with Shredded Roast Chicken:** Plate from Collect Living (www.collectliving.com). Placemat from Republic Home (www.republichome.com). Cutlery and glass from Old Mill Road. **Turkey Breasts with Pine Nut, Preserved Lemon and Fresh Herb Stuffing Balls:** Platter, gold platter and shakers from Old Mill Road. Cutlery from Shut the Front Door. Decoration and top bowl from French Country. Bottom right bowl from Citta. **Roast Lamb with Lemon Crust and Damson Jus, Pan-Fried Grapes and Almonds:** Platter and bowl from French Country. Carving Fork and Salt Spoon from Collected by LeeAnn Yare. Salt dish from Tessuti. Decorations from Citta. **Burrata and Greens with Burnt Butter, Sizzled Sage and Citrus Peel:** Sophie Conran for Portmeirion plates from the Studio of Tableware. Glass from Old Mill Road. **Baklava with Poached Nectarines:** Plate from Old Mill Road. Marble board and candlesticks from Shut the Front Door. Dish from Tessuti. Glass from Collected Living. **Trifle:** Glass dish from Homestore (www.homestore.co.nz). Plates from Old Mill Road. Cutlery from Collect Living. Candlesticks from Shut the Front Door. All uncredited props stylist's own. Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com). Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz).

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



① Grilled Peach and Salted Ricotta Salad with Shredded Roast Chicken

A crisp, lip-smacking white wine with a squeak of sweetness like the Wairau River Marlborough Albariño 2015 (\$25) is perfect here. Its citrus blossom, peach and spice aromas work beautifully with the savoury chicken and creamy saltiness of the ricotta. To order visit www.wairauriverwines.co.nz

② Crispy Roasted Duck with Lychee, Watermelon and Watercress Salad

Gamey duck paired with tangy Thai-style salad just itches to be enjoyed with a floral-forward, lychee-laden gewürztraminer. Reach for the Johanneshof Marlborough Gewürztraminer 2014 (\$29). They're specialists in extracting maximum exotic mouthfeel in this style – it's a winner with the tender duck. To order visit www.glenegarrywines.co.nz

③ Turkey Breast with Pine Nut, Preserved Lemon and Fresh Herb Stuffing Balls

This is a hero dish on the table, so ensure the wine measures up. Do whatever you can to lay your hands on a bottle of the rare, limited release Craggy Range Block 19 Gimblett Gravels Chardonnay 2014 (\$59). Scented with soft, smoky oak and sun-baked river stones, it shows subtle grilled grapefruit, spiced creamed honey and poached fig flavours. Unspeakably good with turkey. To order visit www.craggyrange.com

④ Roast Lamb with Lemon Crust and Damson Jus, Pan-Fried Grapes and Almonds

Pinot is always the 'go-to' with lamb, and the citrus and

herbal tones in the sides mean it's best to choose one that is buoyant and fruity like the Hāhā Marlborough Pinot Noir 2014 (\$19). Bright cherry, spice and gentle plummy complexity merge with an easy silky palate, to wrap around this dish. To order visit www.hahawine.co.nz

⑤ Burrata and Greens with Burnt Butter, Sizzled Sage and Citrus Peel

While this is an Italian recipe, the best match, I believe, is the Cordoniu Cuvée Barcelona 1872 Rosé (\$30.95) from Spain. It's coppery-pink and boasts subtle toasted almond, melon and dry berry notes. Superb with the creamy mozzarella, citrus and nuts. To order visit www.mineralwine.co.nz

⑥ Baklava with Poached Nectarines

All that gorgeous papery pastry with citrus, stonefruit and nuts – what could possibly complement rather than complicate matters? The Pegasus Bay FINALE Noble Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2014 (\$37), that's what. With nutty sweetness and luxurious spicy layers, it's an exceptional match. To order visit www.pegasusbay.com

⑦ Trifle Layered with Lemon Cream and Raspberries with Baby Meringue Topping

Seek out a sweet treat that packs a big citrus punch to square up against the limoncello, meringues and tangy fruit here. I love the Greystone Basket Star Riesling 2011 (\$38.90, 375ml) because it oozes candied mandarin, fig, quince, blue borage honey and baked citrus. Its full, luxuriously structured long finish is to die for. To order visit www.greystonewines.co.nz

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CRISPY PEANUT AND LAMB SKEWERS

PARTY starters

Guests will love these *little morsels* that are big on flavour, with drinks to match.

Crispy Peanut and Lamb Skewers

These tender nuggets of lamb are coated with a crunchy peanut crust and topped with a fresh, zingy salsa.

400 grams lamb fillet or short loin	Cucumber salsa
2 tablespoons Massaman curry paste	10cm piece telegraph cucumber, seeded and diced
1/2 cup thick plain yoghurt	1 long red chilli, seeded and finely chopped
1 cup roasted peanuts	1 tablespoon lime juice
3 tablespoons plain flour	1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon sea salt	1/2 teaspoon caster sugar
vegetable oil for cooking	16 x 10cm skewers (if wooden, soak in cold water for 30 minutes)

Trim any silverskin off the lamb and cut into 2cm pieces.

Combine the curry paste and yoghurt in a bowl.

Add the lamb and turn to coat well.

Cover and chill for up to 24 hours but remove from the fridge 1 hour before cooking.

Salsa: Combine all the ingredients in a bowl.

To cook: Thread 3 pieces of lamb onto each skewer.

Place the peanuts, flour and salt in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped but still with a little texture.

Don't over-process or you will end up with a peanut paste.

Place the peanut flour in a shallow dish and coat the kebabs, gently pressing it to adhere.

Heat two tablespoons of oil in a large sauté pan and cook the skewers for 2 minutes on each side until the coating is golden and crisp. *Don't have the heat too high or the coating will burn.* If necessary, wipe out the pan and start again with fresh oil to cook the remaining skewers.

To serve: Arrange on a platter and place a small spoonful of cucumber salsa on top of each one. **Makes 16 skewers**

Tropical Daze

1 bottle golden rum	To serve
1 ripe pineapple	ginger beer
50 grams caster sugar	limes
5cm fresh ginger, peeled	pineapple to garnish

Peel and quarter the pineapple. Remove and discard the tough core then chop roughly. Place the rum, pineapple, sugar and ginger in a blender. Process until smooth.

To serve: Place ice cubes in highball glasses and add 50ml of the mixture to each glass. Top with chilled ginger beer and stir. Add two squeezed wedges of lime and a slice of pineapple to garnish. **Serves 15-20**



White Christmas Sangria

1 bottle sparkling white wine	seeds from a fresh pomegranate
$\frac{2}{3}$ cup elderflower cordial	12 strawberries, halved
2 cups soda water	3 sprigs mint
2 peaches, sliced	

Combine the liquids in a large pitcher or punch bowl. Add the sliced peaches, pomegranate seeds, halved strawberries and mint.

To serve: Pour into tumblers of ice. **Serves 6-8**



Quince Paste, Thyme and Goat's Cheese Cigars

Wands of crispy pastry filled with warm tangy cheese and fruity quince paste – it'll be hard to stop at just one.

6 sheets filo pastry	100 grams quince paste or other fruit paste
½ cup melted butter	ground pepper
2 tablespoons thyme leaves	
6 tablespoons grated Parmesan	
250 grams soft goat's cheese or feta cheese	

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Place one sheet of pastry on the bench and brush with butter (keep the remaining sheets covered with a tea towel to prevent them drying out). Sprinkle with a third of the thyme, 2 tablespoons of the Parmesan and a grind of pepper. Lay a second sheet over the top. Cut in half lengthways then cut each half into 3 pieces to make 6 squares. Brush each piece with butter.

With a point facing you, crumble 1 tablespoon of feta from corner to corner and top with a slice of quince paste. Roll up into a cigar, leaving the ends open. Place on a lined baking tray. Repeat with the remaining pastry and fillings.

Brush all the pastries with butter then bake for 15 minutes until golden and the pastry is well cooked and crisp.

Turn the tray for even browning if necessary.

To serve: Cool for a few minutes until warm then arrange on a serving platter and drizzle with a little honey and scatter over a few thyme leaves. **Makes 18**

Berry Christmas

10ml Chambord	Champagne or a good white sparkling wine
30ml ruby red grapefruit juice	
5ml lemon juice	2 raspberries

Pour the Chambord, red ruby grapefruit juice and lemon juice into a flute. Top with Champagne or sparkling wine and gently stir to combine. Garnish with two raspberries.

Serves 1





EGG SANDWICHES
WITH CAPER MAYO AND CRESS

CHICKEN AND AVOCADO
MAYONNAISE SANDWICHES

Chicken and Avocado Mayonnaise Sandwiches

Chicken sandwiches are eternally popular and often the first item to disappear when handed around. The key is well-buttered bread, which prevents the filling from soaking in and making the bread soggy.

1 rotisserie or roasted chicken	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
2 spring onions, very finely sliced	1 ripe avocado
16 slices sandwich bread (I used Molenberg wholegrain)	small bunch coriander, chopped
butter at room temperature, for spreading	1 clove garlic, crushed
	finely grated zest 1 lime
	2 tablespoons lime juice
	1 tablespoon Tabasco Green Jalapeño sauce (optional)
	sea salt and ground pepper
Mayonnaise	
3/4 cup mayonnaise	

Mayonnaise: Place all the ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth. Season well.

Filling: Remove all the meat from the chicken, discarding the skin, bones and fat. Chop finely and place in a bowl with the spring onions. Add the mayonnaise and gently fold everything together.

To assemble: Cut the crusts off the bread and butter each slice. Place a spoonful of the filling diagonally across the bread then roll up corner to corner. Cut in half and arrange the sandwiches, cut side down, on a serving platter. **Makes 32 halves or 16 whole sandwiches**

COOK'S TIP: If making ahead of time, cover with a damp tea towel to ensure they don't dry out. I have tied a long piece of chive around each sandwich, but this is only for garnish.

Egg Sandwiches with Caper Mayo and Cress

Use free-range eggs for the best flavour and season the mixture well when making these dainty open-faced sandwiches.

8 eggs, size 7 (large), boiled	2 tablespoons capers, chopped
24 x 1cm thick slices baguette	2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
butter at room temperature, for spreading	finely grated zest 1 lemon
baby watercress, micro leaves or small basil leaves to garnish	1 tablespoon lemon juice
	3 tablespoons chopped basil
Mayonnaise	sea salt and ground pepper
1/2 cup good quality mayonnaise	

Mayonnaise: Combine all the ingredients in a large bowl and season well.

Roughly chop the eggs then mash with a fork, keeping them a little chunky.

Add to the mayonnaise and fold together.

To assemble: Butter the baguette slices then top with a spoonful of egg mayonnaise. Add a small pile of greens and a grind of pepper. **Makes 24**

COOK'S TIP: To achieve perfectly boiled eggs I suggest the following: Place the room temperature eggs in a saucepan and cover with cold water.

Bring to the boil then turn off the heat and cover with the lid. Leave the eggs for exactly seven minutes. Lift out and place them in a bowl of iced water to stop the cooking process immediately. Leave for a few minutes then crack the shells and peel.

Baguette: We used a slim baguette of approximately 5cm in diameter.



SALTED CARAMEL
SAUCE

RASPBERRY
COULIS

CHOCOLATE
FUDGE SAUCE



MINI DONUTS IN
VANILLA SUGAR

Mini Donuts in Vanilla Sugar

A tiny sweet treat is always well received and these will really impress. I've given you three dipping sauces – your choice if you serve one or all three!

1½ cups plain flour	1 egg, size 7 (large)
1½ teaspoons baking powder	Vanilla sugar
pinch sea salt	½ cup caster sugar
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon	½ teaspoon ground vanilla beans (I used Heilala brand) or use ground cinnamon
¼ cup caster sugar	To cook
¼ cup melted butter	vegetable oil for deep frying
100ml milk	

Donuts: Combine the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and caster sugar in a bowl. Whisk the butter, milk and egg together and stir into the dry ingredients to make a thick dough.

Roll teaspoonfuls of the dough in the palm of your hands and place on a lined tray or board. *Dust your hands lightly in flour if they're a bit sticky.* You should have about 40 balls.

Vanilla sugar: Combine the sugar and vanilla or cinnamon in a shallow dish.

To cook: Put 6cm of vegetable oil in a deep, small to medium-sized saucepan and heat it to 160°C on a sugar thermometer or until a piece of bread dropped into the oil turns golden in 30 seconds.

Working in batches, carefully lower the donuts into the oil and cook for 2 minutes, gently stirring the oil for even browning. *Cooking them in batches avoids overcrowding the pan, as that will drop the oil temperature rapidly and the donuts will be heavy.*

Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen towels. Roll in the vanilla sugar to coat. Keep warm in a low oven until all the donuts have been cooked.

To serve: Place in bowls and serve with your choice of dipping sauce. **Makes about 40 mini donuts**

COOK'S TIPS: I like to use a deep 14cm-wide saucepan for cooking the donuts. That way I don't have to use and discard a huge volume of oil.

If making ahead, place the cooked sugared donuts in a large roasting dish and reheat in a 160°C oven for a few minutes until warm.

Chocolate Fudge Sauce

200ml cream	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 tablespoons brown sugar	40 grams butter, chopped
150 grams dark chocolate, chopped	

Put the cream and brown sugar in a saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar.

Remove from the heat and whisk in the chocolate to make a smooth sauce.

Stir in the vanilla extract and the butter.

Tip into a bowl and serve warm.

The fudge sauce will keep refrigerated for 3–4 weeks. When reheating, don't let the sauce boil as it can seize and become grainy. **Makes 2 cups**

Salted Caramel Sauce

1 cup caster sugar	⅓ cup cream
¼ cup water	¼ teaspoon sea salt
2 tablespoons dark rum or whiskey (optional)	

Put the sugar and water in a medium saucepan and slowly bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar.

Boil until the syrup turns a good golden colour, brushing off any sugar crystals from the side of the pot with a pastry brush dipped in cold water.

Remove from the heat and carefully add the rum, cream and salt, taking care as the mixture will bubble up furiously.

Return to the heat and simmer until the sauce is smooth again. Serve just warm. **Makes 1 cup**

Raspberry Coulis

2 cups frozen raspberries, thawed	good squeeze of lemon or lime juice
2 tablespoons icing sugar	

Put all the ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth. Press the mixture through a fine sieve into a bowl and discard the seeds. Adjust the icing sugar and juice to taste. Serve at room temperature. **Makes about 1½ cups**



LEMONGRASS BEEF AND
SALAD SKEWERS

Lemongrass Beef and Salad Skewers

These skewers are bursting with fresh herbs and a vibrant Asian dressing. Use a combination of forks for a relaxed but stylish presentation.

400 grams sirloin steak
olive oil

sea salt and ground pepper

Dressing
2 tablespoons lime juice

2 tablespoons fish sauce

½ – 1 long red chilli, seeded
and finely chopped

1 stalk lemongrass,
finely grated (I use a fine
Microplane grater)

1 teaspoon caster sugar

To assemble

1 carrot, peeled

3 large radishes, julienned

½ small telegraph
cucumber, julienned

handful each mint and
coriander leaves

zest of 1 lime

¼ cup roasted cashew nuts

chilli sauce (optional)

16–20 assorted forks

Rub the beef with a little oil and season both sides.

Heat a sauté pan until very hot then cook the steak for 2–3 minutes each side until well browned but still rare in the centre. Transfer to a plate and rest for 10 minutes. Cut on an angle to create long thin slices of beef.

Dressing: Whisk all the ingredients in a large bowl then add the sliced beef, turning to coat. Set aside for 10 minutes.

To assemble: Lift the beef out of the dressing and lay flat on a board. Top each slice with carrot, radish, cucumber and a pile of herbs. Bring the two ends of the beef slice together and spear with a fork through both sides of the beef to secure.

Arrange on a serving platter.

Chop the lime zest and cashew nuts together then sprinkle over the top. Serve with a bowl of Sriracha or other chilli sauce for dipping if desired. **Makes 16–20**

PROPS: Background from The Props Department. **Peanut and Lamb Skewers:** Platters from Country Road (www.countryroad.com.au). Ego glasses from Design Denmark (www.designdenmark.co.nz). Kate Spade coasters from Allium (www.alliuminteriors.co.nz). **Tropical Daze:** Ego glasses and stirrers from Design Denmark. Fog Linen Silver tray from Father Rabbit (www.fatherrabbit.com). Marble-look coaster from Allium. **White Christmas Sangria:** Glass from Nest (www.nest-direct.com). Mat and straws from Allium. **Quince and Goat's Cheese Cigars:** Platter from Country Road. Stars from French Country (www.frenchcountry.co.nz). Coaster from Allium. VIPP Glasses from Design Denmark. Glass stirrer from The Props Department. **Berry Christmas:** All props from Country Road. **Chicken and Avocado Mayonnaise Sandwiches:** Small table top from French Country. Coasters from Indie Home Collective (www.indiehomecollective.com). **Mini Donuts:** Gold tray and cup from Allium. Black bowls from The Shelter (www.theshelter.co.nz). Blue bowl and glasses from Country Road. Gold and cream bowls from Superette (www.superette.co.nz). Forks from Collected by LeeAnn Yare (www.collected.co.nz). Glasses from Country Road. **Lemongrass Beef and Salad Skewers:** Copper cutlery from Collected by LeeAnn Yare. Black cutlery from The Shelter. Bowl and Kate Spade paper napkins from Allium. **Blood Orange Slushy:** Glasses from Freedom (www.freedomfurniture.co.nz). Bowl from Madder & Rouge (www.madderandrouge.co.nz). Kate Spade coaster from Allium. All uncredited props stylist's own. Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com). Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz).



Blood Orange Slushy

60ml white rum dash of orange bitters

30ml Aperol lemon wedge

60ml blood orange juice Lemon sugar

20ml lemon juice finely grated zest of a lemon

10ml sugar syrup caster sugar

Lemon sugar: Combine the lemon zest and caster sugar on a saucer or plate. Run the lemon wedge around the rims of two coupe glasses. Turn the glasses upside down and dip in the lemon sugar.

Process the liquid ingredients with ice in a blender and divide between the two glasses. Garnish with a strip of orange zest if desired. **Serves 2**

from the deep

Enjoying ocean-fresh seafood in the sun is one of the best parts of a Kiwi summer.



GRILLED CRAYFISH, POTATO SKINS AND GARLIC AIOLI



Grilled Crayfish, Potato Skins and Aioli

This is my posh take on fish and chips and is perfect for entertaining over the Christmas break. Large prawns would also be delicious.

2 cooked crayfish, halved	1/2 teaspoon chipotle or regular Tabasco
Herb butter	
150 grams butter, at room temperature	1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon dried tarragon	sea salt and ground pepper
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard	Parmesan for grating
1 tablespoon lemon juice	
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika	
	To serve
	Potato Skins and Garlic Aioli (see recipe below)

Herb butter: Combine all the ingredients, except the Parmesan, in a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Heat the grill to its highest setting.

Place the crayfish on a baking tray, cut side up and making sure they lie flat. Spread with the butter then top with a good grating of Parmesan.

Grill until the butter is bubbling and starting to brown.

To serve: Transfer the crayfish to plates and serve with the hot potato skins and aioli for dipping and a salad if desired.

Serves 4

Potato Skins and Garlic Aioli

4-6 large Agria potatoes, scrubbed	Garlic aioli
olive oil or melted butter	1/3 cup purchased mayonnaise
sea salt and ground pepper	1/3 cup sour cream
	2 cloves garlic, crushed

Preheat the oven to 200°C fan bake.

Place the potatoes on a baking tray and roast until tender when pierced with a skewer. Cool. Cut in half then scrape out some of the cooked potato, leaving about half still on the skin. Break into long rough pieces and place on a baking tray.

Brush with oil or butter and season generously. Bake until golden and crisp.

Aioli: Whisk the ingredients together and season.

Mussel Escabeche

While fish is traditional in an escabeche, mussels are equally delicious. Serve as a snack with plenty of grilled bread or as part of a shared lunch.

2 kilograms mussels, scrubbed	2 cloves garlic, sliced
2 tablespoons chopped parsley	1/4 teaspoon chilli flakes
Escabeche	1 teaspoon smoked paprika
3 tablespoons olive oil	1 tablespoon honey
1 onion, thinly sliced	1 cup white wine
1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced	zest and juice 1 orange
1 carrot, thinly sliced	1/3 cup sherry vinegar or good red wine vinegar
2 small bay leaves	
	To serve
	grilled bread

Put the mussels in a large saucepan with a splash of water. Cover tightly and cook over a high heat until the mussels have opened. Cool then remove the meat from the shell, checking for any small crabs. Discard the shells.

Escabeche: Heat the oil in a large sauté pan and add the onion, fennel, carrot, bay leaves, garlic, chilli and paprika. Cook until the vegetables are just starting to soften, but still a little firm.

Add the honey, wine, orange zest and juice and the vinegar. Simmer for 5 minutes then add the mussels. Remove from the heat.

Cool, then transfer to a bowl. Cover and chill for several hours, but preferably overnight, turning occasionally.

To serve: Stir in the parsley and serve with grilled bread. Serves 6-8 as a starter

COOK'S TIP: The escabeche will keep in the fridge for 3-4 days.



**GARLIC AND HERB BUTTER
GRILLED CLAMS**



Garlic and Herb Butter Grilled Clams

The secret to getting the best from this recipe is to not over-cook the clams when first steaming them open. Topped with the zesty, herb-packed butter, they are then grilled to perfection.

32 large clams, rinsed

Herb butter

1/3 cup packed parsley leaves

1 tablespoon dried tarragon

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

pinch chilli flakes

100 grams butter, at room temperature

sea salt and ground pepper

Parmesan for grating

To serve

crusty bread

Preheat the grill to its highest setting.

Place the clams in a large saucepan over a high heat. Remove them from the pot as soon as they open. *You want them more raw than cooked at this point.*

Herb butter: Put all the ingredients, except the Parmesan, in a food processor and process until smooth and bright green. Season.

To cook: Gently prise the clam meat from each shell then place it in one half shell. Place the half shells on a baking tray and top each one with a dollop of herb butter.

Add a grating of Parmesan and place under the grill for a couple of minutes or until the butter is golden and bubbling and the clams are just cooked. Serve with plenty of crusty bread for mopping up the delicious juices. *Serves 4*

Prawn, Crispy Bacon and Mint Slaw Rolls

What's not to like about this combination? Use a good quality bread roll like ciabatta or sourdough and pack it full to bursting.

6 long rashers
streaky bacon

Mint slaw

2 cups finely shredded
white cabbage

2 spring onions, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons lemon juice

small handful mint
leaves, shredded

sea salt and ground pepper

Slaw: Place all the ingredients in a bowl and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat a large sauté pan and cook the bacon until golden and crispy. Remove and keep warm.

Add the prawns to the pan, adding a splash of oil if needed. Season and sauté until just cooked through.

To assemble: Halve the buns, leaving one side attached. Spread with mayonnaise then fill each one with bacon, slaw and 2-3 prawns. *Makes 6*



BLOODY MARY AND
TOMATILLO AND CUCUMBER
OYSTER SHOOTERS



Bloody Mary Oyster Shooters

I like my Bloody Marys quite spicy so I really amp up the additions to the tomato juice – start with small amounts, adding more to suit.

12 fresh oysters in the shell, well chilled	few drops Tabasco sauce, to taste
lemon juice	2 tablespoons horseradish sauce
celery salt for the glasses	1 tablespoon lime juice
Bloody Mary	sea salt
2 cups tomato juice	To serve
1/3 cup tequila, vodka or other white spirit of choice	crushed ice
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce	12 shot glasses

Whisk all the Bloody Mary ingredients together in a jug and season with sea salt.

Wet the rims of the shot glasses with lemon juice then dip in the celery salt.

Cover a tray with the crushed ice and nestle the shot glasses into the ice. Pour the mixture into the glasses.

Loosen the oysters from their shells and place one across the top of each glass. Serve immediately. Makes 12

Tomatillo and Cucumber Oyster Shooters

A Mexican take on the classic. If green tomatoes prove elusive, use barely ripe red ones instead.

12 fresh oysters in the shell, well chilled	1 clove garlic, crushed
Tomatillo mix	1/2 cup diced, skin-on cucumber
6 tomatillos	small handful coriander
2 medium green tomatoes, roughly chopped	1/4-1/2 teaspoon chilli flakes
1/3 cup tequila, vodka or other white spirit of choice	sea salt
	12 shot glasses

Place all the tomatillo mix ingredients in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.

Cover a tray with the crushed ice and nestle the shot glasses into the ice. Pour the mixture into the glasses.

Loosen the oysters from the shells and place one across the top of each glass. Serve immediately. Makes 12

PANTRY NOTE: *Tomatillos in brine* can be purchased in tins from gourmet food stores, Mexican food suppliers and some supermarkets.





SCALLOP TOSTADAS

Scallop Tostadas

Make the most of fresh scallops with these delicious Mexican-inspired mouthfuls. Use prawns or fish if scallops aren't available.

12 large fat scallops	2 medium tomatoes, diced
1 teaspoon each ground cumin and paprika	1 spring onion, diced
1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric	2 tablespoons chopped coriander
1 tablespoon olive oil	
salt and ground pepper	
Topping	
1 avocado, diced	
3 tablespoons lime juice	
	To serve
	12 round blue corn taco chips
	1/3 cup sour cream or thick plain yoghurt
	lime wedges

Topping: Mash the avocado with 2 tablespoons of the lime juice until smooth, then season with salt and pepper.

In a separate bowl, combine the tomatoes, spring onion and coriander with the remaining lime juice and season.

To cook: Heat a little olive oil in a sauté pan until very hot. Combine the spices, sprinkle over both sides of the scallops and season with salt and pepper.

Cook the scallops for about 1 minute each side depending on how large they are.

To serve: Top the taco chips with mashed avocado, a dollop of sour cream and a scallop.

Top with more sour cream then spoon over the tomato salad and a grind of pepper.

Serve with lime wedges to squeeze over before eating.
Makes 12

Sesame and Furikake Tuna

Use only the freshest fish for this recipe and if tuna isn't available use salmon or white fish. I like to serve it over cooked brown rice as a small meal or entrée, otherwise offer crisp crackers for scooping it up.

400 grams tuna, diced	Dressing
1 avocado, diced	2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 spring onions, thinly sliced	2 tablespoons mirin
	2 tablespoons rice vinegar
	1 tablespoon peanut oil
	1 tablespoon sesame oil
	1 tablespoon dry English mustard

Dressing: Whisk all the ingredients in a large bowl.

Add the diced tuna, cover and chill for a couple of hours.

To serve: Divide the cooked rice between bowls, if using.

Drain the tuna through a sieve set over another bowl. Return the tuna to its original bowl and carefully stir through the avocado and spring onions.

Drizzle a spoonful of the dressing over the rice then top with the tuna mixture.

Drizzle with the dressing then top with the furikake seasoning, serving extra on the side. **Serves 6**

PANTRY NOTE: Furikake is the salt and pepper of Japan. It's a crunchy, salty, nutty, earthy, briny topping that is a great all-purpose seasoning for rice, seafood and snacks. It's available at Asian food stores and some supermarkets.



BAKED SALMON WITH GREEN APPLE
AND PINE NUT SALAD

Baked Salmon with Green Apple and Pine Nut Salad

I love having salmon in the fridge over Christmas, as it's easy to jazz it up with a simple but stunning topping from ingredients that are usually in the house. I garnished this salmon with fresh borage flowers from my garden.

6 x 150 gram pieces salmon, skin off	1 clove garlic, crushed
olive oil	1 tablespoon lemon juice
sea salt and ground pepper	
	Salad
	1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted
	1 small red onion, thinly sliced
	1 green apple, julienned
	2 tablespoons chopped parsley
	1 tablespoon lemon juice
	1 tablespoon olive oil
Yoghurt topping	
1/2 cup thick plain yoghurt	
1/2 cup sour cream	
1 tablespoon tahini	
2 teaspoons wholegrain honey mustard or Dijon mustard	

Preheat the oven to 150°C fan bake.

Place the salmon on a lined baking tray and brush with a little oil, salt and pepper.

Bake for about 8 minutes, or until the flesh is just cooked through. Cool then chill until ready to assemble.

Topping: Whisk all the ingredients together and season.

Salad: Gently combine all the ingredients in a bowl and season.

To serve: Carefully transfer the salmon to a serving platter. Spread each fillet with the yoghurt mixture then top with the salad and a grind of pepper. **Serves 6**

PROPS: Grilled Crayfish, Potato Skins and Aioli: Dish from Citta Design (www.cittadesign.com). Cutipol 'Goa' matte white fork and Riedel stemless flute from The Studio of Tableware (www.thestudio.co.nz). Jug from Nest (www.nest-direct.com). Napkin from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz). **Garlic and Herb Butter Grilled Clams:** Platter from French Country (www.frenchcountry.co.nz). **Mussel Escabeche:** Dish from Epicure Trading (contact www.epicuretrading.co.nz for stockists). Napkin from Citta. **Prawn, Crispy Bacon and Mint Slaw Rolls:** Platter from Freedom (www.freedomfurniture.co.nz). Glass from The Shelter (www.theshelter.co.nz). **Bloody Mary Oyster Shooters and Tomatillo and Cucumber:** Tray from The Props Department. Tall glasses from The Shelter. Medium size Spiegelau glasses from The Studio of Tableware. Small glasses from Freedom. **Background:** Plate from The Props Department. **Scallop Tostadas:** Platter from The Props Department. Riedel stemless flutes from The Studio of Tableware. Spoon from Collected by Leanne Yare (www.collected.co.nz). Bowl from Republic Home (www.republichome.com). **Baked Salmon with Apple and Pine Nut Salad:** Platter from The Poi Room (www.thepoioroom.co.nz). Cutipol 'Atlantico' forks from The Studio of Tableware. **Sesame and Furikake Tuna:** Board from Macy Home (www.macyhome.co.nz). Dish from The Props Department. Chopsticks from Epicure Trading. **Grilled Prawns and Baby Octopus:** Platter from Nest. Glasses from The Shelter. All uncredited props stylist's own. Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com). Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz).



SESAME AND FURIKAKE TUNA

[recipe previous page]



GRILLED PRAWNS AND BABY OCTOPUS

[recipe next page]

Grilled Prawns and Baby Octopus

These skewers are delicious eaten as is, or to make a larger meal serve alongside the crisp Farm Salad with Feta.

18 pre-cleaned frozen baby octopus, thawed

18 large peeled raw prawns

lemon wedges for serving

Marinade

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic, crushed

¼ teaspoon chilli flakes

½ teaspoon ground allspice

½ teaspoon ground fennel

1 tablespoon chopped thyme

finely grated zest and juice 1 orange

1 teaspoon honey

sea salt and ground pepper

12 long skewers

(if wooden, soak in cold water for 30 minutes first)

Marinade: Whisk all the ingredients in a large bowl and add the octopus and prawns.

Turn to coat well then cover and place in the fridge for at least 2 hours if possible and up to 8 hours.

Thread the marinated octopus and prawns onto the skewers.

Heat a little oil in a large sauté pan. When hot, add the skewers and cook quickly on all sides until just cooked through, spooning over the marinade as they cook.

To serve: Transfer to a platter and serve with lemon wedges or serve with the salad if desired. **Makes 12 skewers**

Farm Salad with Feta

1 iceberg lettuce, broken into rough pieces

1 small telegraph cucumber, cut into rough chunks

1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced

12 large pitted green olives, halved

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons olive oil

sea salt and ground pepper

200 gram block firm feta

Layer the lettuce, cucumber, fennel and olives on a large platter. Top with pieces of feta, drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. **Serves 4**

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



➊ Grilled Crayfish, Potato Skins and Aioli

Crayfish is my 'end-of-days' dish, so whenever treated to it I always ensure the wine is up to the task. Crayfish has sweetness and texture that sing when paired with bold, buttery, old school chardonnay. I recommend the outstanding Saint Clair Cell Block Marlborough Chardonnay 2013 (\$32) because of its pineapple, peach, brûlée and spice-buttered toast characters. To order visit www.saintclair.co.nz

➋ Mussel Escabeche

Crack open a kick-ass, new season sauvignon to do justice to these amazing flavours. The Wairau River Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2015 (\$20) is bursting with sweet sweaty basil, passionfruit, peach and punchy acidity. Beautifully ripe, creamy and full in the mid-palate, it aligns magically with these chilled mussels. To order visit www.wairauriverwines.co.nz

➌ Garlic and Herb Butter Grilled Clams

Tarragon has a unique flavour that lends itself to subtle creamy wines, rather than the high-acid ones we tend to serve with seafood. Here, I'd choose a rich, creamy, cashew and brioche-laden sparkling like the lovely Morton Estate IQ7 NV (\$28), with its hints of lemon and long nutty finish. To order visit www.regionawines.co.nz

➍ Prawn, Crispy Bacon and Mint Slaw Rolls

Two of my favourite things in the world: prawns and bacon – how to find a winning wine for that combo? With its rich nashi pear and spicy apple characters, crunchy acidity and juicy length,

the Maude Central Otago Pinot Gris 2015 (\$24) sorts that out for you. To order visit www.maudewines.co.nz

➎ Scallop Tostadas

These plump scallops topped with tangy salsa need a tall glass of Bach Brewing Driftwood Session Pale Ale (\$8, 500ml). Revel in its tropical and herbaceous notes, alongside a generous malty mouthfeel. To order visit www.beercellar.co.nz

➏ Sesame and Furikake Tuna

The creamy avocado, melt-in-your-mouth tuna and piquant dressing need something refreshing and light, yet packed with tangy, malty flavour like the brand new 2.5% abv Croucher Lowrider IPA (\$4, 330ml). Sensational and sessionable. To order visit www.beercellar.co.nz

➐ Baked Salmon with Green Apple and Pine Nut Salad

Who said salmon always has to be paired with chardonnay? Try a classic Southern Rhône blend from our own shores. The Trinity Hill Gimblett Gravels Marsanne Viognier 2014 (\$30) has unique anise, white pepper, crushed herb and lemon notes, which marry magically here. To order visit www.trinityhill.com

➑ Grilled Prawns and Baby Octopus

I can't think of anything nicer than a cool beer with these sizzling little ocean-dweller kebabs. Schippers Hopricot IPA (\$8, 500ml) has lifted tropical hops and oodles of weight in the mouth. A squeak of fruit followed by caramelised malts really extends the flavour and adds layers of awesome. To order visit www.beercellar.co.nz

End the meal on a sweet note

Delmaine's indulgent toppings add a special touch to any dessert. Made the old fashioned way with real ingredients like butter, cocoa and real fruit with no artificial flavours.



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by SARAH TUCK

festive fun

SARAH TUCK gets into the spirit of the season with delicious gifts to make and give.



MINI CHRISTMAS
CAKES

Mini Christmas Cakes

It just wouldn't be Christmas without a wedge of cake to enjoy with a cup of tea – and it's even better when it arrives as a gift! These little cakes are topped with a luscious, smooth whiskey icing and are the perfect size for grandparents, couples or teachers.

400 grams mixed fruit	2 teaspoons cinnamon
250 grams dried figs, finely chopped	½ teaspoon allspice
250 grams dried prunes, finely chopped	½ teaspoon nutmeg
1¼ cups whiskey	140 grams roughly chopped walnuts
grated zest and juice of 1 small orange	Icing
250 grams butter, softened	150 grams butter, softened
250 grams brown sugar	¼ cup cream cheese, at room temperature
4 eggs	3½ cups icing sugar
4 ripe bananas, mashed	½ cup whiskey
380 grams plain flour	6 × 10cm cake tins

Place the mixed fruit, figs and prunes in a large bowl and add the whiskey, orange zest and juice. Cover and leave to soak overnight, or up to three days.

Line the bases and sides of the tins with baking paper and then wrap the outside of each one in 4 layers (2 doubled) of newspaper or brown paper and secure with string.

This helps prevent the outsides of the cakes from scorching while the insides are still cooking.

Preheat the oven to 150°C.

Beat the butter and sugar in a large bowl until creamy. Beat the eggs in one at a time then add the bananas and soaked fruit and mix to combine. Sift in the flour and spices, add the nuts and mix well. Pour into the prepared tins and bake for 85–90 minutes or until cooked through. Cool to room temperature before icing.

Icing: Beat the butter and cream cheese until soft and pale. Add half the icing sugar and half the whiskey, beating to combine. Add the remainder and beat again. Divide between the cakes and smooth over the top. Decorate as desired.

Makes 6 cakes

Raspberry and White Chocolate Truffles

Pretty as a picture, these truffles are easy (if not a little messy!) to make. But you will be left with festive creamy white chocolate truffles with a raspberry pink chocolate centre – the perfect Christmas treat for white chocolate lovers.

350 grams white chocolate, roughly chopped	large toothpicks or small skewers
80ml cream	candy snowflakes (or other decoration)
1 tablespoon freeze-dried raspberry powder (I used Fresh-As brand)	½ cup finely chopped pistachios
375 grams white chocolate melts	

Melt the first measure of white chocolate with the cream in a bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water – do not allow the base of the bowl to touch the water.

Once melted, whisk in the raspberry powder and scrape the mixture into a shallow container, then refrigerate.

Once cooled, scoop out teaspoonfuls of the mixture and roll into balls. Place the balls on a tray lined with plastic wrap and freeze for 30 minutes.

Melt the white chocolate melts in bursts in the microwave, according to the packet instructions, or use the method described in the first step.

Remove the truffles from the freezer. Skewer them one by one and dip them in the melted white chocolate, twirling to coat then twirling again above the melted chocolate to remove any excess.

Sprinkle with snowflake decorations or pistachios (or leave plain) and stand upright in containers (I used shot glasses) until cool and hard. **Makes 28–30**

JOY



RASPBERRY AND WHITE
CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES
[recipe previous page]

Dukkah

Dukkah has long been a secret addiction of mine – I love the texture and interest, not to mention hit of spice, that it adds to all sorts of dishes. It keeps for ages in a sealed container and with sweet and savoury options to choose from you'll be able to add a bit of zing to whatever you can think of, from breakfast to dessert, or pizza to yoghurt!

Savoury Dukkah

2 cups walnuts	1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup pumpkin seeds	1 teaspoon red chilli flakes
1 cup pine nuts	2 teaspoons flaky sea salt
3 tablespoons cumin seeds	½ cup toasted sesame seeds
3 tablespoons coriander seeds	2 tablespoons black sesame seeds
3 tablespoons fennel seeds	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Place the walnuts, pumpkin seeds and pine nuts on a tray and put in the oven for 8–10 minutes, until the nuts are lightly roasted.

Put cumin, coriander, fennel and pepper in a wide pan and dry fry (without oil) for 3–4 minutes, until fragrant.

Put the roasted nuts and pumpkin seeds in a food processor and pulse briefly.

Grind the toasted spices, in 2–3 batches, using a mortar and pestle.

Add the ground spices, chilli and salt to the nut mixture and pulse briefly so they are well combined and the nuts are ground into chunks. *I like them to have some texture, not be completely sandy butter!* Add the sesame seeds and transfer to an airtight container.

You can sprinkle the savoury dukkah on anything that takes your fancy – from lamb to salads, pizza, pasta, dips, eggplant – even soup. **Makes 3½ cups**



SWEET AND SAVOURY DUKKAH

Sweet Dukkah

2 cups walnuts	1 tablespoon ground cardamom
1 cup pistachio nuts	¼ teaspoon ground cloves
1 cup whole almonds	2 tablespoons raw sugar
1 tablespoon runny honey	2 tablespoons poppy seeds
finely grated zest of a large orange	½ cup toasted sesame seeds
1 tablespoon cinnamon	

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Place the walnuts, pistachio nuts and almonds on a tray. Drizzle with honey, sprinkle over the orange zest and put in the oven for 8–10 minutes until lightly roasted. Put the roasted nuts in a food processor and pulse briefly.

Add the spices and sugar and pulse until combined and the nuts are ground into chunks. Add the poppy and sesame seeds and transfer to an airtight container.

Sprinkle the sweet dukkah on anything from fruit salad to yoghurt, fruit crumble, or even iced cakes. **Makes 3½ cups**

Smoky Bourbon Barbecue Sauce

Christmas goes hand-in-hand with lazy days at the beach and gatherings with friends. This sauce is your secret weapon for adding a kick to barbecue season. It pairs particularly well with pork – try it with spare ribs, sausages or hamburgers, and team with grilled corn, coleslaw, a potato salad and soft rolls for a holiday feast. It's ideal as a marinade too. It's the perfect holiday gift to take away to the beach, as it keeps well for two weeks in the fridge.

2 tablespoons olive oil	3 x 400 gram tins chopped tomatoes in juice
2 onions, chopped	2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 cups brown sugar	1/4 cup cider vinegar
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce	1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup American mustard	

2-3 teaspoons sweet smoked paprika	1/2 teaspoon allspice
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves	salt and pepper
3 tablespoons plain flour	1/3 cup bourbon
pinch cayenne pepper (to taste)	1 teaspoon liquid smoke (optional)

Heat the oil in a large heavy-based pot over a medium/gentle heat. Add the onion and cook for 10 minutes until softened but not coloured.

Add all the remaining ingredients, whisking to incorporate the flour. Bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook uncovered for 35 minutes.

Tip the sauce into a food processor and blend until as smooth as you like. *I like to leave a bit of texture in mine.* Cool and store in sealed containers in the fridge. It will keep for two weeks, refrigerated. **Makes 8 cups**



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HONEY BAKED FETA

BLISTERED TOMATOES
WITH ORANGE AND
BLACK OLIVES

cause for celebration

Take the fuss out of what to feed a crowd
this *festive season* with dips, platters
and dishes to share.

Blistered Tomatoes with Orange and Black Olives

A delicious combination of sweet and sour, these tomatoes take on a deeper flavour when roasted and are perfect piled onto crusty bread with all the luscious pan juices.

2 stems vine tomatoes (about 16 in total)	1 cup green olives
1 punnet mixed coloured cherry tomatoes	1/4 cup pine nuts
pinch chilli flakes	2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon whole fennel seeds	2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1/2 cup golden sultanas	juice 1 orange
	2 tablespoons water
	sea salt and ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Put the tomatoes in one large baking dish or two medium dishes with the chilli, fennel seeds, sultanas, olives and pine nuts. Pour over the oil, vinegar, orange juice and water then season with salt and pepper.

Roast for about 20 minutes, basting with the pan juices, until the skins have split and the tomatoes are very soft but not collapsing completely.

Serve warm or at room temperature with the following Honey Baked Feta, or by themselves as part of a shared meal.

Honey Baked Feta

This recipe is easily doubled or tripled to feed a crowd and best served while still warm.

1 x 200 gram block creamy feta cheese	chilli flakes
olive oil	ground pepper
honey	fennel seeds

Preheat the grill to its highest setting.

Put the feta in an ovenproof serving dish and drizzle with olive oil then honey. Top with a pinch of chilli flakes, fennel seeds and a grind of pepper.

Grill until the top is golden and the cheese has started to soften. Serve immediately.

Smoked Fish Hummus

This is always on the list when whipping up mezze for friends. You can replace the hot smoked salmon with white smoked fish if desired.

Hummus	1 tablespoon olive oil
250 grams moist smoked fish, skin and bones removed	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
3/4 cup cannellini beans (1/2 of a 400 gram tin)	1 clove garlic, crushed
1 tablespoon tahini	sea salt and ground pepper
1 tablespoon horseradish sauce	To serve
zest 1 lemon	olive oil to drizzle
1 tablespoon lemon juice	1/4 cup roasted mixed seeds
	2 tablespoons barberries or chopped cranberries

Place all the ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth. Season generously with salt and pepper and add more lemon juice if needed.

To serve: Spread on a serving plate and drizzle over a little oil. Combine the seeds and barberries and scatter over the top. Makes about 1 1/2 cups

PANTRY NOTE: Barberries are small dried sweet and sour Iranian berries. Available from specialty food stores and some health stores.





GREEN PEA, HARISSA AND CORIANDER HUMMUS



WHIPPED CARROT AND MISO DIP



SMOKED FISH HUMMUS
[recipe previous page]



Green Pea, Harissa and Coriander Hummus

The versatile frozen pea transforms into a light, fresh dip bursting with flavour. Use mint, basil or parsley if coriander doesn't appeal.

1½ cups frozen peas, blanched	¼ cup packed coriander
½ avocado	2 tablespoons olive oil
¾ cup cannellini beans (½ of a 400 gram tin)	1 tablespoon water
2 tablespoons tahini	sea salt and ground pepper
1 teaspoon harissa or more to taste	
zest and juice 1 lime	
2 cloves garlic, crushed	
	To serve
	olive oil
	¼ cup tamari roasted almonds, chopped
	2 tablespoons chopped coriander

Place all the ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth. Season generously with salt and pepper.

To serve: Spread on a serving plate and drizzle over a little oil. Combine the almonds and coriander and scatter over the top.

Makes about 1½ cups

Whipped Carrot and Miso Dip

The savoury, salty richness of miso paste combines with sweet earthy carrots in this vivid flavour-packed dip.

400 grams carrots, peeled and thinly sliced	2 tablespoons white miso paste
3 tablespoons olive oil	2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, crushed	2 tablespoons water
½ teaspoon each ground cumin and ginger	1 teaspoon sesame oil
2 tablespoons water	
1 teaspoon sea salt	To serve
¾ cup cooked cannellini beans (½ of a 400 gram tin)	1 tablespoon Japanese furikake seasoning or toasted sesame seeds

Put the carrots, oil, garlic, spices, the first measure of water and the salt in a medium saucepan. Cover and cook gently, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes or until the carrots are very tender. *Add a little extra water during cooking if needed to prevent them catching on the base of the saucepan.*

Stir in the cannellini beans to heat through. Tip into a food processor and add the remaining ingredients. Process until smooth and light in texture.

Spoon into a serving dish and sprinkle over the furikake or sesame seeds. **Makes 1½ cups**

PANTRY NOTE: Furikake is the salt and pepper of Japan. It's a crunchy, salty, nutty, earthy, briny topping that is a great all-purpose seasoning for rice, seafood and snacks. Available at Asian food stores and some supermarkets.



Mozzarella Salad with Balsamic Roasted Grapes

There's always one recipe that takes people by surprise and this is it. The warm grapes and their juice mingle with the balsamic and are perfect with the creamy mozzarella and lemon salad.

Grapes	To serve
2 bunches red grapes (about 600 grams)	¼ cup thick plain yoghurt
4 large sprigs of thyme	¼ cup cream
2 tablespoons olive oil	250 grams fresh mozzarella or bocconcini in whey, drained
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar	finely grated zest 1 lemon
sea salt and ground pepper	sea salt and ground pepper
	olive oil for drizzling

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Place the thyme sprigs on a lined baking tray and top with the grapes. Drizzle over the olive oil and balsamic vinegar then season with salt and pepper.

Roast for 30 minutes, turning the grapes a couple of times until wilted and juicy. Cool on the tray.

To serve: Stir the yoghurt and cream together in a medium bowl. Rip the cheese into chunks and fold through the cream. Transfer to a serving plate and top with the lemon zest, salt and pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.

Arrange the grapes next to the cheese and pour the pan juices over the grapes. Serve with grilled bread. **Serves 6**



CIDER AND ORANGE
MARMALADE BAKED HAM

Cider and Orange Marmalade Baked Ham

Whether it's Christmas or another special occasion, this gloriously golden ham with a lightly spiced chilli and mustard glaze is sure to impress.

4 kilogram cooked ½ leg ham whole cloves	1/4 cup American mustard ½ cup brown sugar 1 tablespoon tomato paste
Glaze 3 cups pear cider 1 cup orange marmalade	½–1 teaspoon Sriracha or other chilli sauce

Glaze: Put all the ingredients in a medium saucepan and bring to the boil, whisking to dissolve the mustard. Cook for 15 minutes until reduced and a little syrupy.

Cool then refrigerate until ready to use. *The glaze can be made several days ahead of using.*

Preheat the oven to 150°C fan bake.

Ham: Remove the skin from the ham using your fingertips to gently prise it away, taking care not to damage the layer of fat underneath. Leave the skin on the hock.

Stud the fat with cloves.

Place the ham in a foil-lined baking dish, bringing the foil right up the sides of the dish.

Spoon over the glaze, making sure some of the orange peel from the marmalade is sitting on top of the ham.

Bake for about 1½ hours, basting every 30 minutes, until the ham is a good golden colour and hot through to the centre. Leave to rest for 20 minutes before transferring to a serving platter.

To serve: Place your desired wrapping around the ham hock and secure with kitchen string. Serve the ham hot, warm or at room temperature.

Spice-Roasted Mandarins

Roast as many mandarins as desired to accompany the ham.

6 firm-skinned mandarins, halved through the equator	ground ginger and turmeric runny honey
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Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Place the mandarins cut side up in a shallow baking dish. Top each one with a pinch of ginger and turmeric then a drizzle of honey. Add 2 tablespoons of water to the dish and roast until tender, occasionally spooning over the pan juices. *Eat the orange segments not the skins.*

Greek-Style Braised Green Beans

This is one of my favourite summer green bean recipes. Braised with aromatic spices and fennel until tender, they are delicious warm or at room temperature. If making the beans ahead, remove from the fridge at least one hour before serving.

2 tablespoons olive oil	500 grams green beans, stalk end trimmed
1 red onion, thinly sliced	1 × 400 gram tin crushed Italian tomatoes
1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced	1/4 cup water
1 red capsicum, thinly sliced	handful basil, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed	½ cup thick plain yoghurt
½ teaspoon each ground coriander, cumin and smoked paprika	1 clove garlic, crushed
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon	2 tablespoons roasted pine nuts

Heat the oil in a large sauté pan. Add the onion, fennel and capsicum, season with salt then cover and cook for 5 minutes.

Stir in the garlic and all the spices and cook for 1 minute.

Add the beans, tomatoes and water. Season then cover and cook over a low heat for 25–30 minutes, stirring occasionally until the beans are tender and the sauce is reduced and thick. Cool until just warm then stir in the basil.

To serve: Transfer the beans to a platter. Combine the yoghurt and garlic and drizzle over the top. Grind over a little pepper then sprinkle over a pinch of smoked paprika and the pine nuts. Serve warm or at room temperature. **Serves 6–8**

COOK'S TIP: If available, use a mixture of round and flat green beans.

HASSELBACK PORK
FILLET WITH APPLE,
SAGE AND BACON



ZUCCHINI PICKLE AND
POTATO SALAD



Hasselback Pork Fillet with Apple, Sage and Bacon

Traditionally made using potatoes, this recipe takes pork fillets and fills them to bursting with bacon, apple and sage then roasts them until tender and juicy.

2 pork fillets (about 350 grams each)	3 tablespoons olive oil
8 rashers streaky bacon	3 tablespoons white wine
2 cloves garlic, crushed	Parmesan for grating
1 Braeburn apple, halved, cored and thinly sliced	sea salt and ground pepper
handful sage leaves	2 x 20cm long thin wooden skewers

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Make 6–8 evenly spaced cuts along each pork fillet, cutting only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the fillet. Season with salt and pepper.

Chop the bacon finely and combine with the garlic.

Pull each cut apart and insert 2 slices of apple, some bacon and 2 sage leaves. When they are all filled, push a skewer through the pork fillet lengthways to hold everything together.

Place in a lined shallow baking dish and drizzle over the olive oil and the wine.

Top with a generous grating of Parmesan and a grind of pepper.

Roast for about 30 minutes until golden and just cooked through. Rest for 5 minutes then remove the skewers and slice.

Serves 4

Zucchini Pickle and Potato Salad

Also called Bread and Butter pickles, the lightly spiced brine makes a great dressing to toss through the warm potatoes along with the sliced pickles and lots of fresh herbs.

800 grams small waxy potatoes	Dressing
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup zucchini pickles, thinly sliced	3 tablespoons liquid from zucchini pickles
$\frac{1}{2}$ small red onion, finely chopped	2 tablespoons olive oil
mixed chopped herbs (I used dill and basil)	2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
	2 cloves garlic, crushed
	sea salt and ground pepper

Cook the potatoes in boiling salted water until tender.

When cool enough to handle, peel if desired and cut into large pieces, leaving any small potatoes whole. Place in a serving bowl with the sliced pickles and red onion.

Dressing: Whisk everything together in a bowl then pour over the warm potatoes, gently turning them to coat in the dressing. Add the chopped herbs just before serving. **Serves 6**



Orange and Rosewater Baked Yoghurt

Fragrant with aromatic rosewater and citrusy orange, the yoghurt bakes into a light cheesecake-style dessert that goes wonderfully well with roasted or fresh fruit.

2 cups thick, plain full-fat yoghurt	To serve
395 gram tin condensed milk	2 tablespoons finely chopped pistachios
1/4 cup dried milk powder	Roasted Strawberries and Rhubarb (recipe below)
pinch sea salt	
1 teaspoon rosewater or orange flower water	1 x shallow ovenproof baking dish 24cm x 3cm suitable for serving, or 6 x 10cm x 3cm deep capacity ramekins
finely grated zest of 1 orange	

Preheat the oven to 160°C fan bake.

Whisk all the ingredients together in a bowl then pour into the baking dish or ramekins.

Place in a deep roasting tin and pour very hot but not boiling water into the base of the tin. *Not into the pudding.* The water should come halfway up the sides of the baking dish.

Bake for about 20 minutes for a large dish or 10 minutes for individual ramekins, until just set. Carefully lift out of the roasting dish and leave to cool.

To serve: Scatter the pistachios over the baked yoghurt and serve with the roasted fruit.

COOK'S TIP: You must use full-fat yoghurt for this recipe to work.

Roasted Strawberries and Rhubarb

2 punnets strawberries, hulled and halved or quartered if large	1/3 cup caster sugar
	zest and juice 1 large orange
6 stalks red rhubarb, cut 6cm lengths	

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Combine all the ingredients in a baking dish large enough to hold the fruit in a single layer.

Roast for 20 minutes or until the fruit is tender but not falling apart. Cool before serving.

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



➊ Cider and Orange Marmalade Baked Ham

Start out the way you intend to finish and impress your friends along the way by using **Zeffer Pear Cider** (\$7.50, 500ml) with this recipe. Buy a handful of bottles so you can use a decent slug for the gorgeous glaze and then enjoy a glass with your mates as you tuck into this sweet, salty ham. The pure, tangy crisp pear flavours are perfect here. To order visit www.millton.co.nz

➋ Hasselback Pork Fillet with Apples, Sage and Bacon

It may be pricey but believe me, it's worth asking your friends to chip in for a bottle of **Millton Clos de Ste. Anne Gisborne**

Viognier 2013 (\$60). Not only is it a joy to drink, it's sublime with pork of any kind. The rich, heady citrus oil, jasmine and apricot kernel characters are awesome with the sage and salty bacon. To order visit www.millton.co.nz

➌ Orange and Rosewater Baked Yoghurt

It's all about sweet subtlety when pairing a wine with this creamy treat. The **Waipara River Estate Noble Riesling 2013** (\$28) has shy apple pie aromas, which open up after a few swirls of the glass to reveal attractive ginger biscuit, pineapple, peach and toffeel citrus notes. To order visit www.waiparariver.co.nz

PROPS: **Blistered Tomatoes with Orange and Black Olives:** Bakers from Nest (www.nest-direct.com). Marble board from Citta (www.cittadesign.com). Enamel dish, knife, plate, napkin and glass from Father Rabbit (www.fatherrabbit.com). **Background:** All from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz). **Hummus & Dips:** Bowls, plates and napkin from The Props Department. Platters from Houston Design Company (www.houstondesignco.bigcartel.com). **Mozzarella Salad with Balsamic Roasted Grapes:** Platter from Nest. Tablecloth from Tessuti (shop.tessuti.co.nz). All other props from The Props Department. **Cider and Orange Marmalade Baked Ham:** Board from Citta. Cutipol carving set from The Studio of Tableware (www.thestudio.co.nz). Plates and mat from The Props Department. **Hasselback Pork Fillet with Apple, Sage and Bacon:** Board from Collect Living (www.collectiving.com). Bowl from Tessuti. All others from The Props Department. **Greek-Style Braised Green Beans:** Platter from Republic Home. Servers from Collected by LeeAnn Yare (www.collected.co.nz). Bowl from Tessuti. Napkin from The Props Department. **Orange and Rosewater Baked Yoghurt:** Marble board from Collect Living. All others from The Props Department. All uncredited props stylist's own. Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com). Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz).

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freeze dried ingredients



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VEGAN 'CHEESECAKE' WITH
ALMOND AND PISTACHIO BASE,
GINGER VANILLA FILLING AND
BLUEBERRY CHIA JELLY



by KELLY GIBNEY

sweet tradition

KELLY GIBNEY creates Christmas desserts
with a wholefood twist.

Vegan 'Cheesecake' with Almond and Pistachio Base, Ginger Vanilla Filling and Blueberry Chia Jelly

This vegan version of cheesecake is by no means a traditional Christmas dessert, but would sit happily on your festive table with its rich ginger and vanilla notes. As it's stored in the freezer you could make it a day or two ahead.

Base	
¾ cup shelled pistachios	1 teaspoon good quality vanilla extract or seeds from 1 vanilla bean
1 cup almond meal	juice of one lemon
¾ cup desiccated coconut	4 tablespoons coconut cream
¾ cup dried dates, soaked in boiling water for 10 minutes then drained well	3 tablespoons melted coconut oil
1 tablespoon melted coconut oil	4 tablespoons maple syrup or rice malt syrup
2 pinches sea salt	Blueberry chia jelly
2 tablespoons water	2 cups fresh blueberries
Filling	
2½ cups raw cashew nuts, soaked in cold water overnight or for at least 6 hours	4 tablespoons chia seeds
2 teaspoons ground ginger	1 teaspoon good quality vanilla extract or seeds from 1 vanilla bean
½ teaspoon ground mixed spice	juice of one lemon
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon	2 tablespoons maple syrup or rice malt syrup
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg	20cm springform cake tin, bottom lined with baking paper

Base: Place the pistachios, almond meal and coconut in a food processor and blitz until the pistachios are the consistency of coarse breadcrumbs. Add the remaining ingredients and process for a few minutes until combined.

Press evenly into the prepared tin.

Filling: Place all the ingredients in a high-speed blender and mix until well combined, or use a powerful stick blender to mix them in a large jug. Blitz until very smooth and creamy.

Pour over the base and use a spatula to smooth the top. Place in the freezer to set for at least an hour before topping with the blueberry chia jelly.

Jelly: Place all the ingredients in a blender and blend to a purée, or place in a bowl and use a stick blender. Taste and add extra sweetness if preferred. Pour over the top of the chilled cheesecake and use a spatula to ensure it is smooth and even. Return to the freezer to set for at least four hours, or overnight if possible. Store in the freezer and remove 30 minutes before you wish to serve it.

Muscovado Sugar Meringues with Vanilla Mascarpone and Strawberries

Muscovado sugar has a lovely caramel flavour because it is unrefined and the pinch of cinnamon gives these meringues a wonderful Christmassy note.

4 free-range #7 egg whites	Topping
½ cup light muscovado sugar	200 grams mascarpone
1 tablespoon cornflour	1 tablespoon maple syrup
seeds from one vanilla pod	1 teaspoon good quality vanilla extract
	¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
	1 punnet fresh strawberries, trimmed and sliced into halves or quarters as preferred

Preheat the oven to 120°C.

Place the egg whites in a bowl and beat until foamy and starting to stiffen. Add the sugar one tablespoon at a time. Keep beating for at least five more minutes, until the meringue is stiff and glossy.

Add the cornflour, the seeds from the vanilla pod, and the cinnamon and beat for a further minute or two, until combined.

Place heaped spoonfuls of the mixture on a lined baking tray. Pile each one quite high. Use the back of the spoon to make an indent in the top of each meringue. *This will provide a base for the cream and strawberries.*

Place in the oven and bake for 90 minutes without opening the door. Turn the oven off and allow to cool for a further hour before removing. Set aside to cool. Store meringues in an airtight container until ready to use.

Topping: Combine the mascarpone, maple syrup and vanilla. Stir well.

To serve: Place a generous spoonful of mascarpone on top of each meringue. Place fresh strawberries on top and serve. *Makes approximately 10 meringues*



MUSCOVADO SUGAR MERINGUES WITH
VANILLA MASCARPONE AND STRAWBERRIES
[recipe previous page]

Gluten and Dairy-Free Trifle with Coconut Custard and Roasted Fruit

Trifle is always a Kiwi favourite on the Christmas table and I especially adore it for breakfast the next day! This version uses a lightly sweet coconut custard and a flourless almond sponge to create a gluten- and dairy-free version of the original. Make it the evening before so that the flavour has time to soak into the cake.

Cake

2 cups almond meal
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey or maple syrup
 5 free-range #7 eggs, lightly beaten
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup melted coconut oil
 1 heaped teaspoon gluten-free baking powder
 zest of two lemons
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Custard

1 x 400ml tin full fat coconut milk
 1 x 400ml tin full fat coconut cream
 2 tablespoons cornflour
 6 tablespoons maple syrup
 1½ teaspoons good quality vanilla extract

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg

4 free-range egg yolks

Fruit

4 perfectly ripe peaches
 5 plums
 juice of two lemons
 2 generous tablespoons maple syrup or rice malt syrup
 large handful fresh mint, cut into fine ribbons

To assemble

rum or fresh fruit juice (for soaking cake when layering)
 fresh raspberries, to garnish
 fresh mint sprigs, to garnish
 20cm springform cake tin, greased and lined with baking paper

Preheat the oven to 165°C.

Cake: Place all the ingredients in a food processor and process until well combined, or mix well in a large bowl. Tip the batter into the prepared tin. Use the back of a spoon to smooth the surface.

Bake for approximately 45 minutes until golden and lightly firm to the touch. Set aside to cool.

Custard: Mix the cornflour with 4 tablespoons of the coconut milk to create a smooth paste. Pour into a medium-sized saucepan and add the maple syrup, vanilla, nutmeg, remaining coconut milk and the coconut cream. Cook for 4 minutes over a medium-low heat, whisking continuously.

Place the egg yolks in a bowl. Add a few tablespoons of the hot liquid to the yolks to temper them and whisk well. *This will stop them scrambling when you add them to the saucepan.*

Pour the yolks into the saucepan, continuing to whisk. Cook for 5 minutes stirring constantly, ensuring there are only small bubbles breaking the surface. *Do not let the custard reach a boil, otherwise it will split.*



GF DF

GLUTEN AND DAIRY-FREE
TRIFLE WITH COCONUT
CUSTARD AND ROASTED FRUIT

Strain the finished custard through a sieve (if there are any lumps) and set aside to cool for an hour. Then place in the fridge until ready to assemble the trifle.

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Fruit: Remove the stones from the fruit and cut into wedges. Place the peaches and plums in separate ovenproof dishes. *This stops the redness of the plums staining all the fruit.* Squeeze lemon juice over each tray and toss well. Drizzle a tablespoon of maple syrup over each tray. Use your hands to ensure the fruit is evenly and well coated.

Roast for 20 minutes. Rotate the trays once and move the fruit around as necessary for even cooking. Remove from the oven and allow to cool. Once fruit is entirely cool, place in a bowl, sprinkle with the mint and stir through.

To assemble: Cut the cake horizontally then cut each half into quarters to give you 8 large pieces of cake. Place a layer of cake in the bottom of your trifle dish. Drizzle with rum (if using) or fruit juice.

Use a third of the cooked fruit to create an even fruit layer. Pour over a third of the custard. Top with more cake, pressing down on the lower layer to compress. Drizzle with rum again. Layer with a further third of fruit and another third of custard poured on top. Add the last layer of cake. Press down to balance and combine bottom layers.

Drizzle with rum, place remaining fruit on top and pour over the remaining custard. Refrigerate overnight.

Garnish with fresh raspberries and a sprig of fresh mint just before serving.

easy everyday

Simple dinner solutions for any night of the week.



AVOCADO BRUSCHETTA WITH
SMOKED CHICKEN AND MINT SALAD
[recipe next page]



MUSSELS WITH
CIDER AND TARRAGON
[recipe next page]

COOK'S TIP:

This is a great dish for cooking on the barbecue, providing you use a sauté pan with a heatproof handle.



GF

SOY AND FIVE-SPICE FRIED
CHICKEN WITH KUMARA FRIES

Soy and Five-Spice Fried Chicken (gf)

A finger-licking fried chicken dish that can be enjoyed by everyone. Tender thigh meat is infused with aromatics then dusted in spiced rice flour and pan-fried to a golden goodness.

600 grams skin-off, boneless chicken thighs	2 cloves garlic, crushed
3 tablespoons Shaoxing Chinese cooking wine	1 egg yolk
2 tablespoons cornflour	sea salt and ground pepper
3 tablespoons gluten-free soy sauce	To cook
2 tablespoons sesame oil	1 cup white or brown rice flour
1 tablespoon brown sugar	1 teaspoon ground Chinese five-spice
1 teaspoon ground Chinese five-spice	vegetable oil for cooking

Cut each chicken thigh into 3–4 pieces. Stir the Shaoxing and cornflour together in a large bowl until smooth then add all the remaining ingredients. Add the chicken and turn to coat well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour if possible and up to 8 hours.

To cook: Put the rice flour and five-spice in a shallow dish and season with salt and pepper.

Lift the chicken out of the marinade and coat in the flour. Place on a large plate and leave for 10 minutes before cooking.

Heat a couple of tablespoons of oil in a sauté pan and cook the chicken in batches until golden and cooked through. Drain on kitchen towels and keep warm in a low oven until all the chicken is cooked. Add more oil if necessary to cook the remaining chicken.

To serve: Place on a platter and serve with a green salad and the following kumara fries and a bowl of mayonnaise combined with Sriracha or other chilli sauce. **Serves 4**

PANTRY NOTES: Shaoxing cooking wine (pronounced 'shau-sing') is a Chinese wine derived from glutinous rice. The flavour enriches marinades and braised dishes. Available from Asian food stores.

Chinese five-spice is a traditional blend of five or more spices including star anise, cinnamon, cloves, Szechuan pepper and fennel. Available from Asian food stores and in the spice section at supermarkets.

Kumara Fries

3 large purple-skinned kumara	sea salt and ground pepper
olive oil	

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Cut the kumara lengthways into 2cm thick fries. Place on a lined baking tray and brush with oil, salt and pepper.

Roast for about 30 minutes, turning once until tender and golden.

Avocado Bruschetta with Smoked Chicken and Mint Salad

Enjoy a night off from cooking with this easy put-together of crisp, minty chicken salad and avocado-topped bruschetta. Use a good sourdough bread for best results.

4 long slices sourdough bread	1 teaspoon grain mustard
olive oil	1 clove garlic, crushed
1 clove garlic, peeled	1 × smoked chicken breast (about 300 grams), shredded
2 avocados	1 green apple, julienned
2 tablespoons olive oil	small handful mint leaves, chopped
2 teaspoons white wine vinegar	pinch chilli flakes

Preheat the grill to its highest setting.

Brush the bread lightly with olive oil and grill both sides until golden. Rub one side with the raw clove of garlic.

Slice the avocados thinly and arrange over the grilled bread.

Whisk the olive oil, vinegar, mustard and crushed garlic in a large bowl and season.

Add the chicken, apple and mint and toss gently to combine.

Place a stack of salad on each bruschetta and grind over a little pepper and a pinch of chilli flakes. **Serves 4**

To julienne – see Kitchen Notes page 142.

Mussels with Cider and Tarragon

Have lots of fresh crusty bread on hand to mop up all the lovely juices from these tender, succulent mussels.

2 kilograms mussels, scrubbed	2 teaspoons whole fennel seeds
2 tablespoons olive oil	1 × 400 gram tin crushed tomatoes
2 red onions, thinly sliced	2 cups apple cider
2 cloves garlic, crushed	1/4 cup chopped parsley
1/2–1 teaspoon chilli flakes	sea salt and ground pepper
1 tablespoon dried tarragon	

Heat the oil in a large, wide sauté pan and cook the onions with salt and pepper until tender.

Add the garlic, chilli, tarragon and fennel seeds and cook for 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cider and bring to the boil.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes until reduced by half. Tuck the mussels into the sauce, cover and cook for 10 minutes or until the mussels have opened.

Scatter with the parsley and serve immediately. **Serves 4**



**MISO
MAYONNAISE**

1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons white miso paste
2 teaspoons Sriracha sauce
or other chilli sauce

Whisk all the ingredients
together in a bowl.

KOREAN BULGOGI STEAK
WITH MISO MAYONNAISE
AND QUICK PICKLES

Korean Bulgogi Steak with Miso Mayonnaise

In Korean, 'bulgogi' means 'fire meat' and refers traditionally to marinated meat that is grilled. This family favourite is perfect for the barbecue. It's a delicious combo of crisp lettuce, tangy pickles and juicy steak topped off with a dollop of miso mayonnaise.

4 × 200 gram sirloin steaks	3 tablespoons lime juice
Marinade	
2 spring onions, thinly sliced	1/4 cup soy sauce
2 teaspoons grated ginger	1 tablespoon sesame oil
2 cloves garlic, crushed	Quick Pickles (recipe below)
1 tablespoon sesame seeds	Miso Mayonnaise (recipe opposite)
1 tablespoon brown sugar	crisp lettuce leaves
1 teaspoon chilli sauce	

Marinade: Combine all the ingredients in a bowl, stirring to dissolve the sugar.

Lightly score both sides of the steaks in a criss-cross and place in a shallow dish. Spoon over a quarter of the marinade and turn to coat. Set aside for 1 hour if time permits.

To cook: Heat a sauté pan until very hot then rub lightly with oil. Lift the steaks out of the marinade and pat off most of the liquid with kitchen towels.

Cook the steaks for about 2 minutes each side until lightly charred and still rare in the centre.

Transfer to a large plate and spoon 1 teaspoon of the reserved marinade over each steak. *Do not use the leftover marinade from the raw steak.*

Rest for a few minutes then transfer the steak to a board and slice thinly against the grain. Return the meat to the plate with the resting juices.

To serve: Top the lettuce leaves with steak, quick pickles, mayonnaise and a spoonful of the remaining marinade. **Serves 4**

Quick Pickles

1/2 cup cider vinegar	2 radishes, very thinly sliced
1/4 cup water	1 small red onion, very thinly sliced
2 tablespoons caster sugar	1 teaspoon black or white sesame seeds
1 medium carrot, peeled	

Put the vinegar, water and caster sugar in a small saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar.

Using a vegetable peeler, shave the carrot into long strips and place in a shallow dish. Pour over half of the hot pickling liquid and turn to coat.

Put the radishes and red onion in a separate dish and pour over the remaining liquid.

Turn the vegetables every few minutes over the next half hour until softened but still with a little bite.

Lift out of the liquid and place in bowls to serve. Scatter the sesame seeds over the carrots.

Spiced Lamb and Chickpea Shawarma

Chickpeas and tender pieces of lamb are coated in a heady mix of Middle Eastern spices, then wrapped in warm flatbreads with vibrant beetroot hummus and yoghurt.

400 grams lamb fillets, shortloin or leg steaks	To assemble
	4 flatbreads, warm
2 tablespoons olive oil	100 grams purchased beetroot hummus
1 × 400 gram tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed	100 grams thick plain yoghurt
4 teaspoons ras el hanout (purchased or see recipe below)	1 cos lettuce, thinly sliced
	1/2 small telegraph cucumber, cut into matchsticks
	4 medium tomatoes, sliced

Cut the lamb into 2cm pieces, trimming off any fat and sinew.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large sauté pan and add the chickpeas. Cook over a high heat until lightly golden then sprinkle over half of the ras el hanout. Cook for another 2 minutes then transfer to a bowl.

Add the remaining oil to the pan and, when hot, add the lamb. Sprinkle over the remaining spice mix and cook for 2 minutes until lightly golden. Return the chickpeas to the pan and toss together.

To assemble: Place the flatbreads on plates and top with the beetroot hummus and yoghurt. Pile on the lettuce then the lamb and chickpeas and top with cucumber and tomatoes. **Serves 4**

PANTRY NOTE: *Ras el hanout* translates literally as 'head of the shop' and originated in North Africa. It is a complex and distinctive mix of up to 27 spices and herbs with specific quantities being a much guarded secret from one spice shop to the next. Use with meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, rice and grains. Available from food stores and some supermarkets.

Ras el Hanout

1 teaspoon each ground cumin, ginger, ground pepper and sea salt	1/4 teaspoon each ground cloves and turmeric
1/2 teaspoon each ground allspice, coriander, cinnamon and smoked paprika	

Combine all the ingredients and store in an airtight jar.

SPICED LAMB AND CHICKPEA SHAWARMA WITH RAS EL HANOUT
[recipe previous page]



PANZANELLA WITH CRISPY SAUSAGE AND BOCCONCINI



CHOCOLATE, NUT BUTTER AND AVOCADO MOUSSE
[recipe next page]

Fish Kebabs with Pineapple and Lime Salsa

I like to serve these lightly spiced kebabs over cooked brown rice, noodles or couscous. You will need to use thick fish fillets if skewering them lengthways, otherwise cut the fish into chunks and then skewer.

Kebabs

50ml purchased red curry paste (I used Asian Home Gourmet brand)	2 tablespoons lime juice
1/3 cup thick coconut cream	2 teaspoons fish sauce
800 grams firm white fish fillets (I used monkfish)	1/2 teaspoon caster sugar
vegetable oil for cooking	2 teaspoons black sesame seeds
Salsa	To serve
1/2 small ripe pineapple, peeled and diced	cooked rice, noodles or couscous
1/2 small telegraph cucumber, seeded and diced	handful of coriander
1/4 teaspoon chilli flakes	skewers (if using wooden ones, soak in cold water for 30 minutes)

Salsa: Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and set aside.

Kebabs: Mix the red curry paste with the coconut cream in a bowl.

Cut the fish into long strips about 2-3cm wide.

Thread onto skewers then brush well with the curry paste mixture. *If not cooking immediately, cover and refrigerate.*

Heat a little oil in a large sauté pan and cook the kebabs for 2-3 minutes each side until golden and just cooked through. *Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the fish.*

To serve: Divide the rice, noodles or couscous between serving bowls and top with the coriander, fish kebabs and a dollop of salsa. **Serves 4**

Panzanella with Crispy Sausage and Bocconcini

A great combination of fresh, crunchy and cooked components, this salad doesn't need any accompaniments other than a glass of chilled wine!

6 medium vine tomatoes	1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 baguette, ripped into chunks	1 punnet mixed cherry tomatoes, halved
1 eggplant, diced 2cm pieces	1 roasted red capsicum, sliced
5 tablespoons olive oil	1 cup black olives
4 tablespoons red or white wine vinegar	handful rocket leaves
2 cloves garlic, crushed	small handful fresh basil
To assemble	
5 pork and fennel sausages, skins removed	200 grams bocconcini or mozzarella in whey, drained

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan bake.

Cut the tomatoes in half and place in a large bowl with the bread and eggplant.

Whisk 3 tablespoons each of the oil and vinegar in a separate bowl, add the garlic, whisk again and pour over the top then turn everything to coat. Place in a single layer on a lined baking tray, putting the tomatoes to one side of the tray and season everything well.

Roast for about 25 minutes until the bread is golden and crisp and the eggplant is tender.

Remove the tomatoes when cooked and collapsing and place them in a bowl. Pinch off the skins and discard. Whisk the remaining oil and vinegar into the tomatoes and season.

To assemble: Heat the oil in a sauté pan and add the sausages in rough chunks. Cook until golden and crispy on the outside. Drain on kitchen towels.

Place all the ingredients, except the bocconcini, in a large bowl and pour over the tomato dressing, turning to combine.

To serve: Transfer to a large serving bowl and dot over the bocconcini, then drizzle with a little olive oil and ground pepper. **Serves 4**

To roast capsicum - see Kitchen Notes page 142.

AND TO DRINK...

Wine editor Yvonne Lorkin suggests drinks matches for these dishes



Chocolate, Nut Butter and Avocado Mousse

This is one of those recipes that is far more than the sum of its parts – silky, delicious and very rich. Best served in small portions.

Mousse	4 tablespoons good quality cocoa (I used Valrhona)
2 ripe avocados	
4 tablespoons nut butter (I used hazelnut)	

To serve	1/4 cup chopped roasted hazelnuts
4 tablespoons genuine maple syrup	1 punnet fresh raspberries

Mousse: Place all the ingredients in a food processor and blend until thick and smooth.

To serve: Divide between small glasses or bowls and top with the hazelnuts and raspberries. The mousse can be covered and chilled for up to 3 days. **Serves 6-8**

COOK'S TIP: I also use the mousse as a topping on cakes and to fill small cooked pastry cases for a quick dessert. You could use peanut, macadamia and cashew nut butter with the corresponding nut to garnish.

PROPS: **Avocado Bruschetta with Smoked Chicken and Mint Salad:** Amanda Shaney plate from The Poi Room (www.thepoiroom.co.nz). Coaster from Collect Living (www.collectliving.com). Glass, fork and napkin from The Props Department (www.thepropsdepartment.co.nz). **Mussels with Cider and Tarragon:** Lodge skillet from Milly's (millyskitchen.co.nz). Slate boards and glasses from The Props Department. Table mats from Collect Living. **Soy and Five-Spice Fried Chicken:** Board from Collect Living. Mesh basket from Freedom Furniture (www.freedomfurniture.co.nz). Oval bowl and plates from Republic Home (www.republichome.com). Napkin and black bowl from The Props Department. **Korean Bulgogi Steak with Miso Mayonnaise:** Board, yellow bowl, glasses and flat plate from The Props Department. Basket from French Country (www.frenchcountry.co.nz). Coasters from Collect Living. Small bowl from Republic Home. **Spiced Lamb and Chickpea Shawarma:** Plate and coaster from Freedom. Glass and fork from The Props Department. **Fish Kebabs with Pineapple and Lime Salsa:** Amanda Shaney plate from The Poi Room. Black bowl from Country Road (www.countryroad.com.au). Napkin from The Props Department. **Chocolate, Nut Butter and Avocado Mousse:** Pots and board from Freedom. Spoons from The Props Department. **Panzanella with Crispy Sausage and Bocconcini:** Platter from Testutti (shop.testutti.co.nz). Mat from Republic Home. Plates from Houston Design Co (www.houstondesignco.bigcartel.com). Napkin and server from The Props Department. All uncredited props stylist's own. Meat from Neat Meat (www.neatmeat.com). Fresh produce from Farro Fresh (www.farrofresh.co.nz).

➊ Soy and Five-Spice Chicken

Think pink to balance out the spice and pour the full, fruity Black Barn Rosé 2015 (\$23). Made from merlot grown at the front of the property, it's super pale but loaded with pomegranate, raspberry, red fruits and dried herbs. Great for those who like their rosé with meat on its bones. To order visit www.blackbarn.com

➋ Avocado Bruschetta with Smoked Chicken & Mint Salad

The smoked chicken's salty sweetness combined with the twang of mint and creamy avocado cries out for the lifted spritz of a good prosecco. The pillow-y lemony spritz and lengthy dry finish of the Santa Margherita Prosecco Superiore DOCG (\$25) work perfectly. To order visit www.glengarrywines.co.nz

➌ Mussels with Cider and Tarragon

You want a seriously good cider to do these mussels justice. Paynter's Reserve Apple Cider (\$9, 500ml) is glossy and golden in the glass and bursting with pure, spicy bittersweet apple characters, finely textured fizz and a squeak of sweetness on the finish. To order visit www.paynterscider.co.nz

➍ Korean Bulgogi Steak with Miso Mayonnaise

This marinade is quite fiery, so have a few Epic No Agenda IBAs (\$10, 500ml) in the fridge. This inventive beer balances lifted grapefruit, resinous hop action with the rich, cuddly character of a full brown ale. It answers every question your tastebuds might ask with this recipe. To order visit www.finewinedelivery.co.nz

➎ Spiced Lamb and Chickpea Shawarma

A gentle fruit-driven, cherry-ish pinot noir is needed here, as soft red fruits always work brilliantly with ras el hanout, in my experience. The Behave Marlborough Pinot Noir 2014 (\$42) by Odyssey Wines has baked berries and an easy velvety, generous finish. To order visit www.odysseywines.co.nz

➏ Fish Kebabs with Pineapple and Lime Salsa

This is a new family favourite in my house, and with it a glass of the brand new Sparks Brewing Prospector Farmhouse Ale (\$5.50, 330ml). It has sexy spicy-sour aromas followed by creamy tropical hop weight and a soft lemony finish that counters the salsa's sweetness and the tang of the curry paste. For stockists visit www.sparksbrewing.co.nz

➐ Panzanella with Crispy Sausage and Bocconcini

A rich, smoky red wine to partner up with the juicy fattiness of the sausage is the ticket here. Stay Italiano with the Farnese Fantini Sangiovese 2013 (\$18). With a whiff of charred ham hock, vanilla, pepper and baking spices, it's intense, smoky and boldly built. To order visit www.atouchofitaly.co.nz

➑ Chocolate, Nut Butter and Avocado Mousse

Something sinfully rich, slippery and spicy is required with this mousse. The Valdespino Oloroso Solera V.O.S 1842 (\$48, 375ml) has just the right amount of concentrated raisin, fig and smoky flavours for the job. To order visit www.glengarrywines.co.nz

MEAT Matters



An essential component of any recipe is having the right cut of meat for the job. As with all cooking, the best quality meat will give a superior end result. Take the time get to know your meat, one cut at a time.

THE CUT Sirloin, also known as porterhouse, is a premium cut and a great choice when you are cooking for the family.

It's fabulous roasted as a whole piece or cut into individual steaks and panfried or grilled on the barbecue. Sliced thinly, it's perfect for using in a stir-fry. Look for the New Zealand Beef and Lamb Quality Mark to know you're buying the best New Zealand has to offer.

COOKING TIPS As with all steak, the secret is to sear it on a very high heat initially and then cook to your personal preference. Cook the meat from room temperature rather than directly out of the fridge.

A heavy-based sauté pan or skillet is ideal as they can be heated until very hot and will give a slightly sweet and crusty finish to the outside of the meat. Lightly brush the steak with a little olive oil and season with sea salt and ground black pepper.

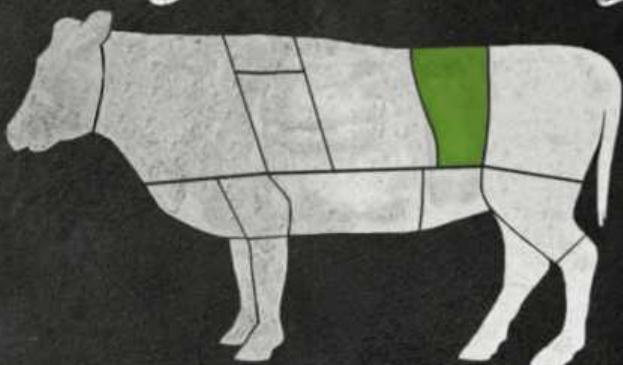
For a steak that is 22mm thick, cook it approximately 2 minutes each side; for rare, 3-4 minutes each side; for medium-rare, and 4-6 minutes each side for medium. Rest the steak for 2-3 minutes before serving to allow the meat fibers to relax and reabsorb some of the juices.

TO SERVE Try one of these delicious serving options:

Serve slices of hot cooked sirloin over one of the following salads: Crushed hot cooked waxy potatoes combined with capers, chopped anchovies, olives, mint and crushed garlic. Drizzle with olive oil and a squeeze of lemon juice and season with salt and pepper.

Toss cubes of eggplant and sliced red onion with olive oil, smoked paprika and chilli then roast until tender. Serve with yoghurt, harissa and chopped coriander.

Sirloin steak



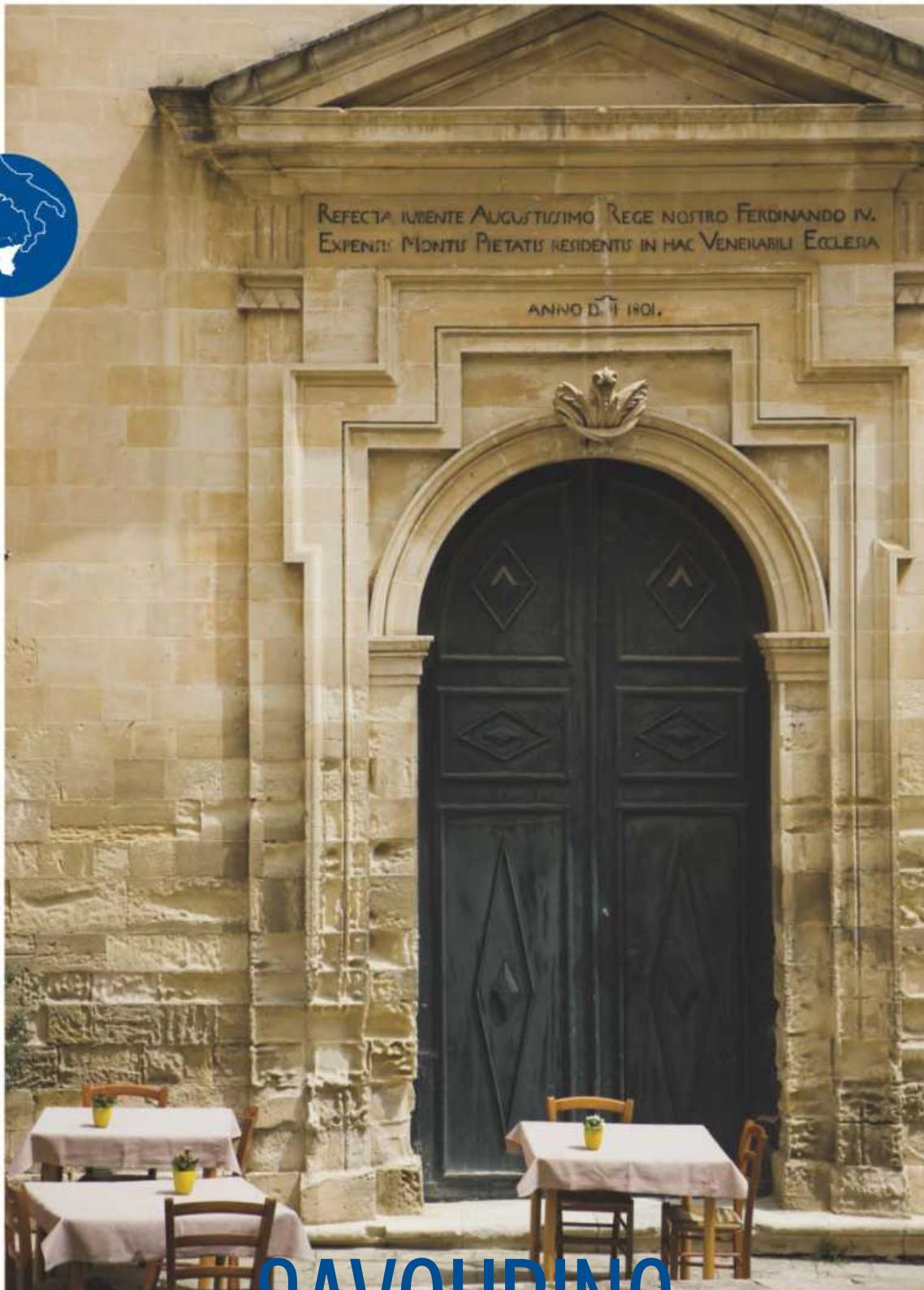
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SICILY



SAVOURING SICILY

NICOLA EDMONDS explores the Mediterranean's largest island and finds Sicily's food is much like its people: colourful, often dramatic and unforgettable.



Sicily is just a pebble's throw from the southern tip of Calabria (the 'toe' of Italy's distinctive boot shape), but this is a very different realm from the rest of Italy – it pulses with a gravitational pull all its own. Amongst gracious city *palazzi* there are bullet holes in doorways and bomb-blasted alleyways – reminders of a turbulent past. Baroque towns of golden splendour give way to sun-parched volcanic landscapes strewn with stone walls and ancient fortresses. To the west, brooding headlands rise up from the glassy waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Sicilian food is equally intriguing and bound intrinsically to the region's history.

Blessed by the absence of Barbarian invaders – who had their hands full further north – the cuisine of the island was able to develop uninterrupted for more than 2500 years, arguably the oldest continuous cuisine in Europe. By the 5th century BC, the city of Syracuse in Sicily's southeast was considered the gastronomic capital of the classical world. It was also home to the world's first school for chefs. The first cookbook was written here by local cook and author, Mithaecus, who gave it the title *The Lost Art of Cooking* and included simple advice for dealing with fish: discard the head, slice, rinse and add cheese – a controversial accompaniment at the time.

Invading Arabs arrived 400 years later with their own highly sophisticated cuisine. They introduced crops such as rice, aubergine and citrus, as well as cane sugar, which created a passion for sweet dishes that remain a favourite among today's Sicilians.

During the 19th century, Sicily's fashionable elite imported chefs from France to prepare food for them at home. A new class of chef, the *monzù* (from the French 'monsieur') was born. The food for the rich was refined, while the poor simply had to make do with whatever was at hand.

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Lunchtime al fresco
in the baroque Sicilian
town of Ragusa.

THIS PAGE: Taking
a dip in the azure
waters of Macari
Beach in San Vito
Lo Capo; mounds of
fresh silver sardines
are a common sight in
Sicily's markets.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Fishing boats in the ancient city of Syracuse; fishmongers fillet and clean fresh anchovies on the spot for customers; *azzeruolo* fruit are native to the south; sun-dried chillies; a restaurateur serves up hearty fresh pasta; swordfish on display at a fishmonger's; stuffed anchovies at Nettuno da Siciliano; locals at a market in Syracuse's narrow streets.

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Tangerine sorbet from Noto's famous Dolceria Costanzo; the Siciliano family welcome guests to their cooking classes.



At that time, “the main ingredient in the Sicilian diet was hunger,” says American author and food historian Mary Taylor Simeti, who moved to the island during the early 60s to work with activist Danilo Dolci – known as the ‘Sicilian Gandhi’. Dolci’s mission was to target poverty and the Mafia, which were, more often than not, intertwined.

But the poor at least had access to an array of unusual ingredients and the essential duet of sunshine and volcanic soil, which led to dishes that – like the Sicilians themselves – are rich in colour, texture and drama.

Mary Taylor Simeti now lives with her Sicilian husband and family on their beautiful organic farm near Palermo. She describes Sicilian cuisine as “very sophisticated”. “It’s one of product and combination rather than diddling around with things,” she says, citing *pasta alla norma* as an example: a seemingly simple blend of tomatoes, basil and aubergine, but which relies on the high quality of the ingredients. Many meals that were once emblems of poverty, such as pasta with sautéed anchovies and breadcrumbs, or the delicious *caciocavallo* (fried sheep’s cheese), are now appearing on restaurant menus, and signal a return to simple well-made food for all.

“Sicilians are capable of talking about food endlessly,” says Mary. “Even those who have absolutely no professional background.”

The island of Sicily presents such a dizzying whirl of contrasts it may take a second visit just to digest the experience.

SWEET

Sicily’s nuns and monks first studied the art of pastry-making to support their religious orders. They also learned to preserve and candy the island’s glorious citrus fruits and guarded the traditions of their ice cream zealously. Sadly, the tradition of nuns selling direct to the public from their convent doors is fast disappearing, but the sweet fruits of their labours have provided inspiration for the treats that cram shelves and cabinets of many a gelato and pastry shop across the island.

Note

Some of the best sweet treats are found in Noto, described as the finest baroque town in Sicily. The town is also famous for Dolceria Costanzo, where you can sample gelati, almond sweets and cassata. It is run by the children of the late Corrado Costanzo, who spent his life studying the techniques discovered in the monasteries.

Be sure to try the *sorbetto di mandarino* (tangerine sorbet), described by Costanzo



as “a little bit of Sicily in your mouth”. There are also gelati fragrant with rose and Sicilian jasmine and a granita made from almond milk. The last is a favourite Sicilian breakfast staple, to be enjoyed with the morning espresso and served cushioned between two halves of a brioche roll.

Dolceria Costanzo
Via S. Spaventa 7-9, Noto

Sweet and sour: cooking classes with the Siciliano family

Mimmo Siciliano likes to recount his parents’ teenage romance as a Sicilian version of Romeo and Juliet, but with a happy ending. Angelo and Francesca opened their restaurant, Nettuno da Siciliano, in Taormina 34 years ago and it’s an enchanting blend of old and new Sicilian traditions in food and in life. The family also welcomes guests to join them in hands-on cooking classes at the restaurant.

Before the three-course lunch, Chef Angelo deftly demonstrates how to roll fine slim tubes of pasta dough and deploys umbrella spokes to create just the right size breeze hole



for the macaroni. Francesca shows how to precisely chop and sauté ingredients for a perfect Sicilian *caponata*, a sweet and sour marriage of freshly made tomato sauce, crisp young celery, green olives, plump green capers, and raisins, plus sweet violet aubergines and white onions that are native to the island.

Nettuno da Siciliano
(Restaurant, Taormina)
www.ristorantenettunodasiciliano.it



SAVOURY

Trapani Salt Museum

Not far from the bustle of Trapani, the historic Via del Sale (Salt Road) winds alongside countless crystalline salt flats. The pools are dotted with the relics of a busy past, such as graceful wooden windmills that still tilt in the breeze and were used originally to move water between the pools and to mill the salt.

Within one of these mills, near the small village of Nubio, the Culcasi family has created a museum to illustrate the history of salt making. Alberto, the third generation of the family business, gives visitors guided tours of the museum. The family still harvests salt from the land and hosts a small restaurant, Trattoria del Sale. Alberto's brother, Salvatore, serves simple dishes that are typical of the area, each of which has the delicate glitter of flavour imbued by the local harvest.

Trattoria del Sale & Trapani

Salt Museum

• www.museodelsale.it

Montalbo Cheese

Giacomo Gati, who has been dubbed 'the genius of goat's cheese', has spent the past decade working to preserve an endangered native breed of goat. Within 40 minutes drive of Agrigento's ancient temples, a dainty flock of long-fringed Girgentana goats forage for their midday feast amongst swathes of wild fennel.

Giacomo began his flock with just two goats and the cheese he produced from their milk helped fund his now successful enterprise. Today, two other local Girgentana farmers supply him with their milk and the award-winning cheeses are sold through specialist suppliers locally and abroad.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Alberto Culcasi at his family's Trapani Salt Museum; the hillside town of Modica; salt crystals piled for collection in Trapani; author Mary Taylor Simeti; the scenery of Ragusa; milk from native Girgentana goats is used to create a distinctive goat's milk cheese, often wrapped in lemon leaves; an array of typical marzipan treats on display in Palermo.



Behind the nondescript brown shuttered doors of his small dairy, Giacomo transforms his goats' milk into myriad flavours and shapes. Some are wrapped in fig leaves, others in the tart leaves of the local lemon trees. In one dark corner there is a tray containing a few small white rounds bathing in a soft cocoon of ash.

Visits to Giacomo Gati (Montalbo cheese) can be arranged via: Massimo Brucato at SlowFood Agrigento.

slowfoodag@gmail.com

THE SEA

“When a fisherman catches a fish, he wouldn’t even notice if Christ passed by” (old Sicilian proverb).

Drifting flotillas of fishermen can be found almost everywhere as the sun rises over the Sicilian coastline. The waters of this island teem with a year-round supply of sparkling fish. Especially coveted by diners are the thick-cut steaks of fresh tuna and swordfish, the hulking presence of which are displayed like trophies in the cabinet of any self-respecting fishmonger’s store.

One dish in particular, *pasta con le sarde* (pasta with sardines), is particularly evocative of Sicily and the sea. It provokes serious debate, right down to the best altitude at which to collect the fennel. The recipe is a blend of sardines, saffron, pine nuts, dried currants and sprigs of wild fennel.

Osteria Dei Marinai

The Calbretta family has feted its patrons with the jewels of the local catch in the town of Aci Trezza for 35 years. ‘Papa’ (Salvatore), with proprietorial hands on his red braces, presides over the tiny dining room with its view of the jagged teeth of the ‘Cyclops’ rock piles jutting out of the sea just across the road; while his two sons Mario and Alfio are at the helm in the kitchen.

Amongst the wonders on offer are platters of glistening raw fish, tiny sweet mussels and clams and shrimp marinated in lemon juice. Cuttlefish are grilled whole, showing off the blush pink of their pretty frills. The tuna is chargrilled in a fragrant wrapping of lemon leaves, while the swordfish involtini are fillets rolled and stuffed with Marsala-soaked raisins and pine nuts.

Osteria dei Marinai - Via Lungomare dei Ciclopi n.185, Aci Trezza

Nicola Edmonds visited Sicily as a guest of Antonio Cacace and La Bella Italia. For more details of Antonio’s Food & Culture Tours:

• www.labellaitalia.co.nz
• ciao@labellaitalia.co.nz
• 04 566 9303 ext 4

STAY

Bosco Falconeria – Partinico (Palermo)
Farmhouse accommodation on Mary Taylor Simeti’s farm
• info@boscofalconeria.it
• +39 091 8789083 / +39 328 7596576
• www.boscofalconeria.it

Il Giardino della Rupe – B&B, Agrigento
• info@ilgiardinodellarupe.it
• www.ilgiardinodellarupe.it

Lilia’s House – Studio, Syracuse
• liliashouse@gmail.com
• www.liliashouse.it

Beach House – Macari, San Vito lo Capo
• bruno.macaione@gmail.com
• www.homeaway.co.uk/p1746820

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Recipe For A Perfect Summer

This pulled pomegranate lamb is perfect for any special occasion, mid-week dinner or Christmas lunch and you can find the recipe in this summer's *mEAT Magazine*, alongside other recipes perfect for warm weather gatherings and barbecues. Find *mEAT Magazine* at your local supermarket or butcher and for more inspiration visit recipes.co.nz, which boasts recipes for everything from quick, easy burgers to delicious Sunday roasts.



PEARLS OF PERFECTION

Made from infused extra virgin olive oil encapsulated in a soft gel, Telegraph Hill Pearls literally burst with flavour in your mouth. They're the perfect vegetarian caviar for canapés, or try the Lemongrass, Kaffir Lime & Chilli Pearls on salmon and sushi and Truffle Pearls on prawns, seafood and Spanish omelette. Used by top restaurants like Ebisu and Mister D's, the Pearls are now available at Farro Fresh, Capers Epicurean, Mediterranean Foods Kapiti, The Olive Market, Little River Café & Shop, and online at www.telegraphhill.co.nz



PEACHY KEEN

A trophy winner at the 2015 Bragato Awards, Villa Maria Single Vineyard Ihumatao Chardonnay 2013 displays an array of white peach and oatmeal on the nose, followed by a butterscotch palate with integrated fine oak. Medium-bodied, it is finely balanced with subtle flint and minerality nuances. Available from the Villa Maria cellar door or fine wine retailers. RRP\$34.99.

A Little Bit Fancy

Lift your mayo game this summer with the new Parmesan & Truffle Mayonnaise from 362 Grillhouse. With its velvety texture and tangy flavour, it's the perfect accompaniment to poached eggs, asparagus, bacon-wrapped scallops or crispy fries. Handmade from local ingredients, the 362 Grillhouse extensive range includes Steak & Chop Sauce, Bourbon & Bacon Jam, Green Goddess Dressing, Sweet Chilli Beetroot Relish and more. Local tastes better. Available through specialty stores nationwide or www.wildcountry.co.nz





CULTURE CLUB

Strengthen your natural defenses with No Udder's daily coconut probiotic drink and natural yoghurts, which contain live cultures to improve digestion and support your gut and immune system. The No Udder yoghurts come in two flavours: Almond (made from almond milk) and Coconut (made from coconut milk). Both are dairy-, gluten- and lactose-free. These delicious and healthy yoghurts are suitable for the entire family. Available at selected food and New World stores. www.caprilac.com



LIGHTEN UP

Everyone wants a sunny home, but as the days get brighter it's possible to have too much of a good thing. The fine light control of Luxaflex blinds offers the ideal solution for moderating spring and summer sunshine and until December 31st, Luxaflex Venetian blinds are 15% off.* Choose Woodmates® polyresin venetians for bathrooms and kitchens because they're impervious to moisture; choose Countrywoods® timber venetians for living areas and bedrooms; or enjoy the cool retro styling of the original Luxaflex venetian aluminium blind. Visit www.luxaflex.co.nz for stockists.

*Offer excludes automation



Think Pink

A trophy winner at the New Zealand International Wine Show 2015, the strawberry, cranberry and crunchy raspberry in the Left Field Hawke's Bay Rosé 2015 bounce off the walls with brightness and freshness. Meanwhile, the wine's more serious side advocates a richer, sophisticated and slightly drier personality. A perfect match for seared salmon or sipping in the summer sunshine. Available from www.leftfieldwines.com, First Glass, Glengarry and New World supermarkets. RRP\$15.99

New From Vitamix

Superior engineering meets compact design in the revolutionary new Vitamix S30. The perfect gift for any food lover, it powers through ice and the toughest wholefood ingredients to prepare hot soups, frozen desserts, sauces, dips and smoothies quickly and easily. It comes with a family-size 1.2L jug and two 600ml blending containers, which double as travel cups, and is available in eight colours. Choose your colour and find out more at www.vitamix.co.nz/S30





WINDOW SHOPPING



Summer Stunner

If you're looking for a softly textured wine to accompany those fresh summer seafood salads or barbecued chicken dishes, then try the newly-released 2015 Sacred Hill Orange Label Hawke's Bay Chardonnay. Harvested from Sacred Hill's iconic Riflemen's Vineyard in Hawke's Bay, this enticing Chardonnay has a rich core of ripe stonefruit with hints of orange rind fragrance and nutty biscuit. The complex deliciousness is rounded off with a seductive, creamy smooth finish. Rich and tasty, this wine is sure to see you through the months of summer entertaining ahead. RRP\$19.99. Available from all good wine retailers.



SUPERIOR STEAK

Silver Fern Farms Beef Flat-Iron Steaks are affectionately known as the 'ugly' steak, due to their unusual flat shape and well-marbled complexion. Skillfully removed from the often overlooked oyster blade, the Flat-Iron Steaks have all gristle removed, leaving them beautifully tender and full of flavour. Master Graders have hand-selected the very best beef using the Silver Fern Farms Eating Quality System®, guaranteeing every steak is going to be tasty, tender and juicy. Available at supermarkets nationwide. Visit www.silverfernfoods.com for recipe ideas.

It's In The Bag

Fisher & Paykel has kicked off a delicious new collaboration with My Food Bag. Spend \$4000 on 'Designed to Match' Fisher & Paykel Kitchen appliances at participating retailers before 29 February, 2016 and you can claim a \$500 My Food Bag gift (determined by your delivery location). That's your dinner menu and new kitchen sorted in one. For more details visit www.fisherpaykel.co.nz/myfoodbag

GO FOR GOAT

With farms in the Waikato as well as Gippsland, Australia, Caprilac has been producing a delicious range of goats' milk and yoghurt for many years. Crafted from 100% fresh goats' milk from their family-owned farms, the range offers a healthy alternative to cows' milk products. Made with live cultures, the yoghurt is naturally A2, gluten-free and free of preservatives, artificial flavours and colours. The goat milk is easily digested and can aid those who suffer from food intolerances or allergies. Available at selected food and New World stores. www.caprillac.com





ICONS MEET FOR COFFEE

Two iconic brands, both renowned for quality and innovation, have partnered to introduce a new portioned coffee machine: Nespresso by KitchenAid. With stylish curved lines, the die-cast metal machine has a range of premium features and comes with an Aeroccino milk-frother. RRP\$949. Complement your new machine this festive season with a limited edition accessory from Nespresso: the PIXIE Espresso & Lungo Kit. The set contains two Espresso and two Lungo PIXIE cups in stainless steel decorated with the engraved Nespresso monogram pattern. RRP\$75. All products available from Nespresso Boutiques and at www.nespresso.com



BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

A double trophy winner after being awarded the Sauvignon Blanc Trophy at the New Zealand International Wine Show 2015 and the International Sauvignon Blanc Trophy at the Decanter Asia Wine Awards 2015, the Vidal Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2015 offers tremendous value for money. A distinctive and classical Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, it's a perfect summer wine to savour. Crisp and fresh with aromas of passionfruit, citrus and vibrant tropical fruit flavours, it's definitely going to be a crowd pleaser. RRP\$13.99. Available from all good wine retailers or www.vidal.co.nz



Steam Power

When it comes to versatility and creativity, a Miele Steam Oven is truly a kitchen necessity. Steaming intensifies food's natural flavours while retaining its nutritional goodness to deliver flavoursome and healthy cooking results. Miele offers an impressive choice of built-in pure steam ovens, built-in steam combination ovens or a benchtop pure steam model. Each offers a multitude of applications to support the creativity of the home cook during the festive period. From the preparation of amazing desserts such as crème brûlée, lemon delicious and éclairs, to fish and meat dishes and crunchy bread; even the Christmas turkey can be created with ease. Phone 0800 4 MIELE (0800 464 353) or visit www.miele.co.nz



FRUIT FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Introducing the latest addition to the Fresh As family – the Fresh As Kiddies range. Packed in a foil bag for a healthy snack on the go and lunch box-ready, it will delight adults and children alike. The carton of six packets includes two packets each of strawberry slices, grape slices and apple pieces. 100% natural, no added sugar or preservatives. Visit www.fresh-as.com for the Fresh As online store and stockist details.

KITCHEN NOTES

NOTES FOR COOKS

To ensure successful results in cooking, we recommend you invest in accurate measuring tools – measuring cups and spoons and a measuring jug are essential and electronic scales are particularly useful as they weigh accurately in both imperial and metric.

Always follow one set of measures in a recipe.
Do not mix them up.

Dish uses:

A fan forced oven unless otherwise specified
Large eggs (No.7)
Level spoons and cup measurements
Liquids are always measured in a jug and dry ingredients in measuring cups.
NB: One tablespoon is 15ml
(the Australian tablespoon is 20ml)

USEFUL INGREDIENT EQUIVALENTS

Breadcrumbs

1 cup fresh = 50 grams
1 cup dried = 115 grams

Butter

1 (American) stick = 100 grams
1 cup = 225 grams
2 tablespoons = 30 grams

Cheese

1 cup grated tasty = 115 grams
1 cup Parmesan = 150 grams

Egg Whites

Large (No. 7) egg white = 30 grams

Flour

1 level measuring cup = 150 grams

Gelatine

3 teaspoons granulated/3 leaves (gold grade) will set 500mls/2 cups liquid to a light jelly.

1 rounded tablespoon granulated/4–5 leaves (gold grade) will set 500mls/2 cups liquid to a firm jelly.

Leaf gelatine comes in varying grades. It is wise to check the setting properties of the leaf gelatine you buy before use.

Honey, Golden Syrup

1 cup = 350 grams

Onions

1 x 115 gram onion = 1 cup chopped

Rice

1 cup uncooked rice = 200 grams
1 cup cooked = 165 grams

Sugar

1 cup caster and granulated = 225 grams
1 cup brown sugar = 200 grams
1 cup icing sugar = 125 grams

Spinach

650 grams spinach leaves = ¾ cup purée

Yeast

2 tablespoons fresh (compressed)
= 1 tablespoon dried (granulated)

OVEN TEMPERATURES

225° Fahrenheit = 110° Celsius = cool oven
300° Fahrenheit = 150° Celsius = very low oven
350° Fahrenheit = 180° Celsius = moderate oven
400° Fahrenheit = 200° Celsius = hot oven
450° Fahrenheit = 230° Celsius = very hot oven

VOLUME

1 level teaspoon = 5mls
1 level tablespoon = 15mls
1 oz/fl oz = 28.35 grams/mls
1 pound = 450 grams
1 cup liquid = 250mls
1 pint = 600mls
1 litre = 1000mls

WEIGHT

10 grams = ¼oz
15 grams = ½oz
25 grams = 1oz (actual 28.35 grams)
450 grams = 1 pound
1 kilogram = 2½ pounds

LENGTH

1cm = ½ inch
2.5cm = 1 inch
12cm = 4½ inches
20cm = 8 inches
24cm = 9½ inches
30cm = 12 inches

FOOD NAME EQUIVALENTS

We all use cookbooks and magazines from around the world. These are some of the more common ingredients which have differing names.

baking paper	parchment paper/ silicone paper
beetroot	beets
cannellini beans	white kidney bean
capsicum	bell pepper/ sweet pepper
celeriac	celery root
coriander	cilantro
cream	heavy cream
eggplant	aubergine
fillet (as in meat)	tenderloin
golden syrup	dark corn syrup
hapuka	gropers
icing sugar	confectioners sugar
plain flour	standard/pure flour
prawn	jumbo shrimp
rocket	rocquette/arugula
scallopini	pattypan squash
spring onions	green onions
zucchini	courgettes

USEFUL TECHNIQUES

Bake blind: line a prepared pastry case with baking paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. The beans support the pastry as it cooks. Bake in a preheated 190°C – 200°C oven for up to 20 minutes before removing the paper and weights. The shell should now have taken form. Return to the oven for the time specified in the recipe.

Julienne: this term refers to food, often vegetables, that are sliced into thin matchsticks. This is most easily done using a mandolin but can also be done by hand. First cut into 3mm (⅛-inch) thick slices. Stack the slices and cut into 3mm (⅛-inch) thick strips. Cut into desired length.

Remove pin bones from salmon: fillets almost always contain small pin bones. To remove them, first run your finger down the centre of the fillet, pushing down gently so the bones pop out slightly as they are located. Using a pair of tweezers or needle-nosed pliers, pull out each bone carefully, with the grain to avoid tearing the flesh.

Roast capsicums: place the capsicum on a tray and roast in a pre-heated 200°C oven until tender but not collapsing. When cool, peel and remove the seeds.

Roast nuts: spread the nuts out in a single layer on a shallow baking pan and place in a preheated 180°C oven. Shake the pan every few minutes until the nuts are golden. Watch carefully as the nuts can become too brown very quickly. Remove and tip into another dish to cool.

Sterilise bottles and jars: put jars or bottles and their lids through a hot cycle of the dishwasher. Alternatively, wash in hot soapy water and rinse well. Place them on an oven tray in a cold oven. Turn the heat to 120°C and leave for 30 minutes.

Toast and grind seeds and spices: heat a small dry pan over a medium heat. Add the spice and toss until fragrant and just starting to darken in colour. Be very careful not to burn as this will make them bitter. Toast one spice at a time rather than combining, as each spice will take a different time to toast. Tip out onto a plate and cool. Grind in a mortar and pestle or a small coffee grinder, reserved for the purpose.

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DRIZZLE TO IMPRESS



Chocolate Frangipane Tart with Berries (gf)

No pastry required, just the lovely moist filling from a traditional tart, all topped with rich vanilla mascarpone and juicy berries – the perfect Christmas Day dessert.

110 grams butter
100 grams dark chocolate, chopped
2 tablespoons golden syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 x #7 eggs (large)
120 grams ground almonds
1/4 cup caster sugar
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
2 tablespoons cocoa
(I used Valrhona)

To serve
100 grams mascarpone
1/2 cup cream
1 teaspoon vanilla paste or extract
1 punnet strawberries, hulled and sliced
1/2 punnet blueberries and raspberries
20cm loose-based tart tin, greased and lined with baking paper and placed on a baking tray.

Preheat the oven to 160°C fan bake.

Cake: Put the butter, chocolate, golden syrup and vanilla in a large heatproof bowl and set over a saucepan of simmering water, stirring occasionally until melted. *Don't let the base of the saucepan touch the water.* Take off the heat and cool for 10 minutes.

Whisk in the eggs to make a thick, glossy batter.

Combine the almonds, both of the sugars, cardamom and the cocoa, ensuring there are no lumps. Add to the chocolate mixture and stir to combine. Pour into the greased tin and smooth the top.

Bake for 25 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the tart comes out with a few damp crumbs attached. Cool then remove from the tin.

To serve: Whisk the mascarpone, cream and vanilla paste together until thick. *Don't over beat or the mascarpone will split.* Spread the cream over the tart and top with the sliced strawberries and berries and a dusting of icing sugar. Top with edible flowers if desired. **Serves 8-10**

COOKS TIP: The tart can be made 2-3 days ahead. Keep in an airtight container and top with the mascarpone and berries on the day of serving.



For more Friday Baking recipes visit www.dish.co.nz or sign up for our weekly newsletter

The Perfect Recipe

Baking perfection is the result of the best ingredients in your kitchen. Start with the Chef Sense from Kenwood, add sugar and egg whites, and let the magic begin...

With over 20 attachments, the Kenwood Chef Sense offers complete versatility, no matter what the recipe. There are five bowl tools for all your baking needs - taking the effort out of making golden pastry and whipping up light-as-air meringue. The Chef Sense kitchen machine is the main ingredient for perfect results every time.



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